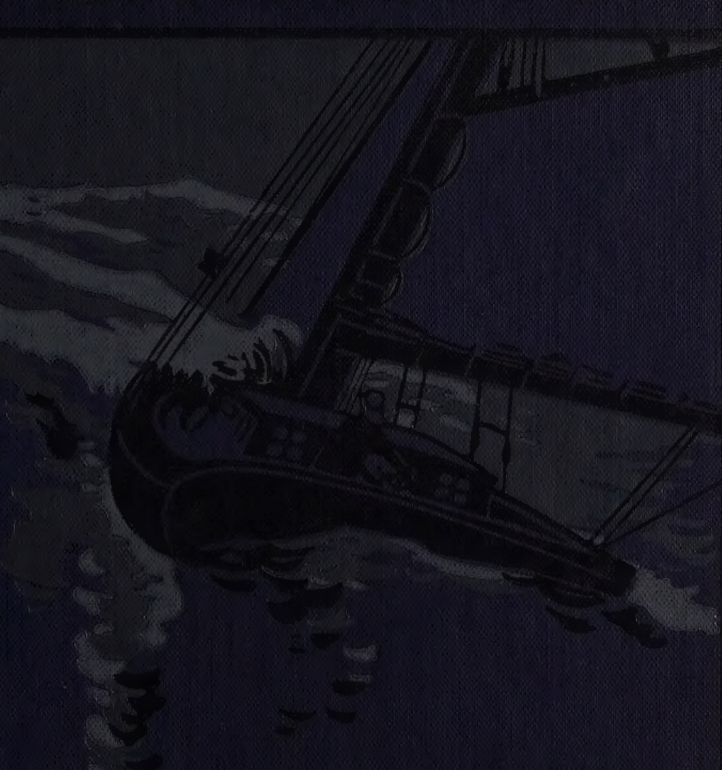

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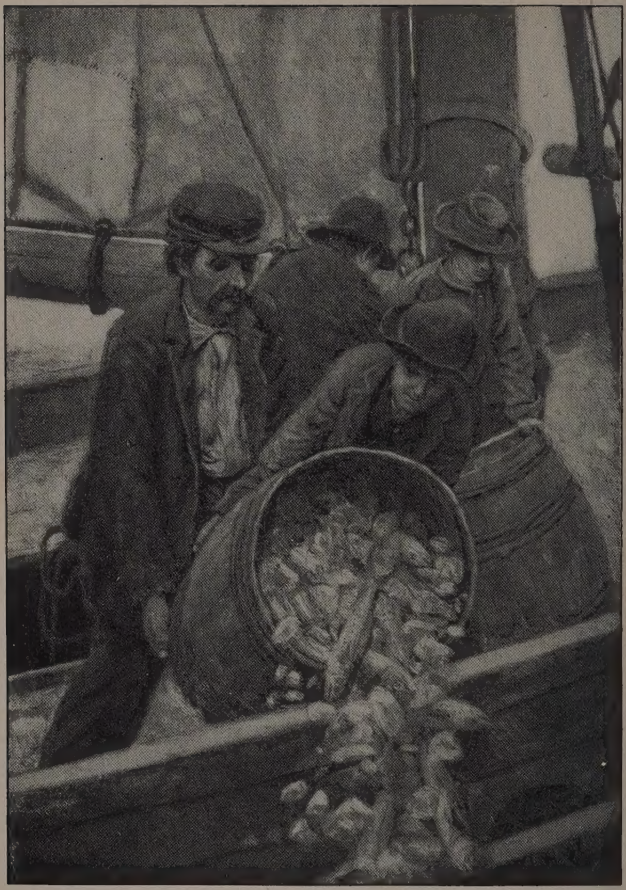

OVERBOARD WENT THE MACKEREL

A CAPE COD BOY

BY

SOPHIE SWETT

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ILLUSTRATED BY P. L. HOYT

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A Cape Cod Boy

CHAPTER I

A BUSINESS BUMP

"Times bein' so hard, I can't see my way clear to keep that little Portergee through the winter," said Cap'n 'Siah Doane, with a solemn shake of his gray head.

And three hearts seemed to stand still; they were sixteen-year-old Caddy's, who was the housekeeper, and had knit the little "Portergee's" winter supply of stockings and mittens as carefully as she had knit her own boys', and young Josiah's and little Israel's, who had only truly enjoyed life since they had had a companion who knew as much of the great world as the geography and a fairy-book put together. For the little "Portergee," Manuel Silva, had been tossed upon the Cape Cod sands by a

wreck, after cruising about in all the seas, and picking up sixteen years' worth of knowledge in many lands.

It was almost into the door-yard of Cap'n 'Siah Doane's weather-beaten cottage at the Point that he had been carried by a discriminating wave; and with a dislocated shoulder, and a wound on the head which, as Cap'n 'Siah declared, would have killed anything but a "pesky little Portergee," he stayed.

There were summer visitors to Scauset, and he had done errands for them, and shared young Josiah's jobs of fishing and clamming for the boarding-houses, and generally been "worth his keep," as Cap'n 'Siah carefully figured out, being a thrifty and prudent soul. In fact, Scauset people generally thought that Cap'n 'Siah would have been better off if he had been less prudent and cautious. He wouldn't take the least risk for fear of losing; he would scarcely go fishing with a fair wind lest it should become a foul one before he came back, and he wouldn't raise cranberries lest the market should be over-supplied when he came to sell.

"Now God made things chancy to develop folks, and he made 'em chancier than common

on Cape Cod," Uncle Saul Nickerson was always saying as a hint to Cap'n 'Siah. And little Israel had heard so much about his grandfather's bump of caution that he thought it must mean the wen on the top of his bald head.

In the winter there were no jobs in Scauset. Manuel had talked of going to Kingstown, where there were many of his race, to try to get a chance to sail with a Portuguese captain; but they had all protested earnestly against his leaving, and little Israel had raised a mighty wail. Manuel said he never had struck a home port before, and it was evident that he longed with all his heart to stay. But with a hard winter before them Cap'n 'Siah's bump of caution had got into working order, and he had made the dreadful announcement with which this story begins.

They all looked at each other in consternation; and even Caddy, who had grown very sensible by having to look out for them all, felt a rush of tears to her eyes.

At that very moment the little "Portergee" was digging his heels into the sand—which he did when he had on his thinking-cap as natu-

rally as a Yankee boy whistles—and saying to himself that he should immediately go away, it was so dull, if he didn't feel as if he must stay and take care of these people who had been so kind to him. He meditatively tapped the top of his own thickly thatched head where the wen was on the Cap'n's, and shook his head with sad significance. He, like little Israel, thought that wen was the bump of caution which kept Cap'n 'Siah from everything that was enterprising.

"If I do not stay and take care of them they are los'!" said the little "Portergee" to himself.

But how? For a brave and enterprising spirit what opportunities had Scauset? There was a shadow of discouragement upon even Manuel's stout heart; but just then Hiram Tinker called to him from the dory in which he was putting in to shore.

"Seen the herrin'? Kingstown Harbor is chockfull of 'em! Greatest sight anybody ever see! All the traps and seines and nets are full a'ready, and they're gettin' the cold-storage plants ready to take 'em in. Seems as if all the herrin' in creation had drifted into Kingstown Harbor!"

Manuel didn't hear the last words; he was running around to the cove where Michael Fretas lived. Michael was Portuguese. He owned a small fishing boat, and Manuel had helped him to paint and letter her in the summer. Manuel could paint straight letters—that is, nearly straight. Michael's daughter, who taught school farther up the cape, had wished to name the vessel the Daylight; but Manuel's spelling of English was a little uncertain, and he made her the Delight instead. And Michael said he would not have it changed because Manuel was his friend and countryman.

Michael was an old man, and his daughters sent him money, and he now never used his fishing-boat in the winter, but no one had ever been able to hire it, and Manuel's eager face was clouded with doubt as he ran around to Michael's house in the cove.

They were still talking about sending him away, Cap'n 'Siah insisting, and Caddy and the others remonstrating with tears, when Manuel burst into the living-room and poured out the story of the great catch of herring in Kingstown Harbor. The doubt was all gone from his face now, and the eagerness was like a flame.

"You don't say! Seems as if we'd ought to get a couple of barrels to salt; or, if they're plenty as you say, some to fertilize the garden. But there! we hain't got anything but a row-boat, and we can't. Such chances ain't for poor folks," and Cap'n 'Siah sighed heavily.

"I am going—in the Delight. We want barrels, empty barrels, and all must go—all!" cried Manuel, breathlessly.

"The Delight! How come Michael to let you have her?" demanded Cap'n 'Siah; but Manuel and young Josiah were already rolling empty barrels down to the slip, and Caddy was putting up a basket of provisions, and essaying at the same time the difficult task of buttoning little Israel into his thick jacket while he turned a somersault.

They were on board the Delight, with nets and barrels, with Jo Fretas, Michael's nephew, slightly infirm of wit but strong of body, to help, and the sails were spread to a favoring breeze, when Cap'n 'Siah was discovered, hurrying as fast as he could, and shouting to them to wait.

"I expect it won't cost me nothin' to see what's goin' on. Anyhow, I sha'n't pay for the

boat!" he said, as he came on board. "How come he to let you have her?"

But now Manuel was running back to the house. When he returned he offered no explanation, but Caddy caught sight of the rough little checker-board that he had made, tucked under his pea-jacket, and heard the rattle of the wooden checker-men in his pocket.

Cap'n 'Siah was extremely fond of a game of checkers; but it was only a short sail to Kingstown, and there was no danger of being becalmed, and on a trip that promised so much excitement who would think of checkers?

Caddy even remembered the blow on the head which it had once been feared would injure Manuel's reasoning faculties. If Manuel should prove to be foolish, her grandfather must not send him away! They would take care of him always! So thought Caddy, with a dry sob in her throat.

Not the half had been told about the herring. Since the world began Kingstown had never seen her harbor packed with fish like this. The waves tossed them upon the wharves, into the baskets and barrels of those who had no nets, at the very feet of the vagrant Kingstown cats,

who, for lack of rod and line, had been forced to haunt the fish-houses.

The herring had only just appeared, but it was estimated that when all appliances were ready a thousand barrels a day could be taken.

They worked with a will, all the little party from Porcupine Point, even Cap'n 'Siah, although he grumbled that herring wouldn't be worth nothing, there were so many, and that the Delight would surely sink if they loaded her so heavily, and that they could never get salt enough to salt so many herring, and if they ate so many they should be like pin-cushions before spring.

There had been a fair wind to carry them down to Kingstown, and in returning they were forced to beat.

"But there's going to be a change," said Manuel, surveying the heavens with a sailor's practiced eye, "and after we get round the Point 'twill be all right."

That was when they were making their way out of Kingstown Harbor, and little Israel was shouting with wonder at the herring which sometimes seemed like a great wall, through which the Delight pushed her bow slowly.

"Round the Point?" echoed young Josiah and Caddy, wonderingly; and Caddy thought again of the blow on the head that had been enough to kill anything but a "Portergee."

And Manuel, growing suddenly pale, and showing new, strong lines in his sharp little sixteen-year-old face, beckoned them impressively aft—yet not so far aft as to be overheard by Jo Fretas, who was at the helm. Cap'n 'Siah was watching the herring with little Israel, and saying, "I vum! I never see so much of anything in my life, without 'twas sand."

Manuel had to use persuasion when he divulged his plan, chiefly with Caddy, who had inherited some of her grandfather's caution, and who had never been to Boston, fifty miles away, in her life.

Young Josiah had demurred but little, and that only—as in a candid moment he afterwards confessed to Manuel—because he hadn't planned it. As for young Josiah's being afraid, like Caddy—catch him!

Caddy was afraid little Israel would be seasick, and was sure that her grandfather would jump overboard, but Manuel tapped the top of his head significantly, and upon second thought

Caddy decided that his bump of caution would be likely to prevent that.

And at last, when the Point was already in sight, Caddy, with her chin looking pretty square, as young Josiah said, called her grandfather to come down into the Delight's very small cabin and play checkers.

Cap'n Josiah came with alacrity, for he could never get checker-playing enough; moreover, the wind was growing fresh, and it was chilly on deck. He said maybe there would be time for a game before they got home, and Manuel was a good little "Portergee" to think of the board.

"Let him beat! Make him beat! Play like fox!" whispered Manuel to Caddy, as she followed her grandfather into the cabin.

And the Delight rounded the Point and found a more favoring wind, as Manuel had predicted, and the little weather-beaten house on the shore was left desolate and alone, with the early shadows of the November afternoon closing in upon it; while Cap'n 'Siah hilariously beat Caddy at checkers, and quite forgot that it was time they should be at home. When Caddy was forced to light a lamp in the little cabin he

"PLAY LIKE A FOX"

sprang to his feet and demanded, in great excitement, where that "pesky little Portergee" was letting the vessel drift to.

Manuel appeared in the doorway to explain, with young Josiah looking over his shoulder—although young Josiah was but thirteen, he was taller than Manuel—and with little Israel's beaming face thrust forward between his knees.

"It is not Portuguese like Jo Fretas and me who let the vessel drift. To navigate is in our blood, like the great Colombo!" Manuel drew his spiderlike little figure up as tall as he possibly could. "We carry the first herring to Boston; the very first, because the others have wait to load more. There is fair wind, and the moon will shine bright; before morning we shall be there. To carry you off was disrespect, and I lament him." Manuel removed his small cap and bowed profoundly. "But you are known there in Boston as great ship-master; you have license to sell these many years."

Cap'n 'Siah sat down and mopped his brow.

"I was consid'able well known up there before things went wrong, and I got so kind of discouraged," he admitted. "But you—you're a terrible resky little Portergee!"

Manuel drew a breath that made his small chest heave; it was going to be all right with Cap'n 'Siah, whom he did not fear, but loved.

"The disrespect I lament him," he repeated, anxiously, "but the wind so fair, and to be the first in with the herring, and the Delight so comfortable, with bunks for every one except Jo and me, who have known life, and are content with coils of rope!"

"How come he to let you have the vessel?" asked Cap'n 'Siah, abruptly.

"Michael Fretas he is my friend and countryman," answered Manuel, evasively.

There was all the moonlight that Manuel had promised, and the wind held instead of going down at nightfall, as it so often does; in fact, it made the waves so rough that as they drew near Boston Light little Israel was very seasick, and even Caddy had a qualm. But who remembered that when the Delight thrust her sharp little nose between the larger vessels that lay at T wharf, in the murky morning light? Little Israel felt that life had suddenly turned into a fairy-story, and young Josiah, and even Caddy, had little doubt that the family fortunes were made.

Alas and alas! T wharf was piled with barrels of herring! On an adjoining wharf was a small mountain of the fish, as they had been shoveled from a schooner! The great catch had begun to reach the Boston market in the steamer that got in the night before, and in two or three large schooners that could take all the wind out of the little Delight's sails!

"Why hadn't you listened to me and kept from such foolhardy pranks?" cried Cap'n 'Siah, in angry despair. "Here we be, likely to be becalmed, and not get home for a week, with a cargo that's good for nothing but to heave overboard, and no victuals to eat!"

Little Israel gave way to despair at this dreadful prospect and set up a mighty roar. Caddy thought it was better, after all, to have a bump of caution; and young Josiah, with red rims appearing around his eyes, as they always did when he was frightened, looked inquiringly at the leader of the enterprise.

"It is so—as I have hardly thought it possible—the market is glut!" said the leader, calmly, but with a sharp line between his tensely drawn brows.

"Little mites of herring, too! Look how big

them are!" Cap'n 'Siah pointed to the barrels nearest them on the wharf.

"He told me to pick 'em out small!" said young Josiah, in an aggrieved tone, for his faith in the leader had begun to waver.

The color leaped suddenly into Manuel's sharp, thin little face.

"It is true they are small; one must provide a little for the evil day, even when one shall not think the market will be glut! I go, but I will be back again by-and-by!"

He made his way swiftly through the crowd of clamoring fish-dealers, with which the wharf was already alive, and in the long avenue that led to the street he disappeared from their sight.

"That's the last we shall ever see of that tarnal little Portergee!" said Cap'n 'Siah.

But after the Cap'n had threatened to throw the herring overboard, to sell them for enough to buy a breakfast, and never to pay for the boat, Caddy had given way to tears in company with little Israel, and young Josiah had permitted himself to express a preference for Yankees, Manuel came walking across the plank to the Delight, his small brown face aglow.

A man came with him, well-dressed and with a business-like air, but dark-skinned and with ear-rings. Manuel introduced him proudly as his friend and countryman, José Macés, foreman of the great canning factory in —— Street. He would buy the little herring; it was of them that sardines were made in his factory.

"It is why I have choose the small ones," Manuel explained, serenely.

But it was not until Cap'n 'Siah saw the barrels loaded upon a great dray, with the name of José Macés' firm upon it, that he could believe the good fortune.

They all had to count the money over twice; it seemed too much to be true; and little Israel bit and rung the silver pieces. Then Manuel made them go to a restaurant on Atlantic Avenue to breakfast, and although Cap'n 'Siah thought it was reckless extravagance, he murmured all the way that Manuel was a "dreadful cute little Portergee." At the restaurant he met two sea-captains who were old friends, and had so good a time that he forgot how reckless it all was.

But when the Delight had set sail for her homeward voyage he grew silent and dejected.

He wished he had a vessel he owned; the old captains had told him that he ought to go sanding; that there was money in it.

"But the Delight! She will be so good a vessel for that," said Manuel, calmly. "It is true that I have contracts with the canning factory to deliver many herring—and mackerel, too, in their season; but there will be times—oh, plenty, until we buy another boat, to use her for the sanding, too!"

"What in nater are you talking about? Don't you know that Michael Fretas won't lend his boat?" growled Cap'n 'Siah.

"The Delight she begin to-day to be mine. I agree to pay the first installment from the herring money; after that it will be easy, and—the disrespect I lament him—but if you would share in the business—and afterwards young Josiah—and with Mees Caddy to keep the home port snug—" Manuel took off his old cap, with one of his beautiful bows.

"And I thought of letting you go away," said Cap'n 'Siah, with something between a growl and a sob in his throat.

"Oh, but I should not—nevair!" cried Manuel, his little peaked face alight. "You that

have been so good and make true home for me, should I leave you to take care of yourself?"

Cap'n 'Siah's great grizzly chin actually quivered; he threw back his head and laughed to hide it. "If you ain't the all-firedest little Portergee!" he said.

CHAPTER II

THE STRIPED MARSH AFFAIR

"So long as readin', writin', and 'rithmetic can't be painted into folks I ain't goin' to sign a petition to 'propriate money to paint the schoolhouse." Cap'n 'Siah Doane seated himself more firmly astride the wood-pile, and returned a folded paper to Cap'n Seba Oakes without a glance. Cap'n Seba prodded with his wooden leg in the sand, always a very good sign that he was in danger of losing his temper.

"Porkypine P'int hain't got the name of bein' enterprisin'," he said, candidly, "but I thought maybe, sence you'd got that little Portergee that 'pears to be middlin' smart, tradin' up to Boston, and all—"

"He ain't sixteen yet, but I calculate he's smart enough to know that tradin's bread and butter, and paintin' school-houses ain't," said Cap'n 'Siah, dryly.

"Is it to paint the school-house? Oh, we will help to paint him, will we not?" cried an eager voice, and from the wood-shed appeared the "little Portergee." He took the paper from Cap'n Seba and looked it over with the determined frown between his brows with which he always encountered written English. "Say that we will help!" He laid his small, nervous, dark-skinned hand appealingly upon Cap'n 'Siah's great horny one. "Shall it be say, when people go by in ships, that the Scauset school-house are like old fish, with his scales peel off in the sun? It is I, Manuel Silva, who will sign the paper, if you will give me leave."

"La, sonny, you can sign it if you're a mind to; your signin' ain't of no great account, one way or t'other," said Cap'n 'Siah. But his fond pride in Manny showed in every crease of his weather-beaten face. "I've kind of fell into the habit of lettin' Manny do about as he's a mind to," he added to Cap'n Seba, with a little uneasy shuffle, as if he were ashamed of his weakness. "He seems to have a way of lightin' on his feet. And he's a square little fellow. When he 'grees to do a thing, you can depend on his doing his best."

Manny dug his small bare feet into the sand to brace himself to an erect position.

"I, Manuel Silva, will help the town to do it." His small, dark face glowed. "In that school the arithmetic go into me here." Manuel tapped his forehead. "And now the fish-peddlers at the Boston wharves no more can cheat me. Till they are pale and tremble do I reckon up!"

"Now, Manny, don't you go to puttin' down nothin' resky," implored Cap'n 'Siah. "You've had your ups and downs, and the Delight ain't all paid for yet."

Manuel had worked manfully with his stump of a pencil, the wrinkle deep between his brows.

"All I have put down is this; surely you will not think it too much when the arithmetic is put into me there?"—he looked appealingly at Cap'n 'Siah—"Manuel Silva will do his quarter."

The two old captains looked at each other and laughed.

"La, let it go! Like enough they won't make head or tail of it; he means his part," said Cap'n 'Siah, aside.

Cap'n Seba hobbled off, his wooden leg mak-

ing the sand fly, and Manuel fell to chopping wood with a will, to avoid discouraging conversation with Cap'n 'Siah. He felt within himself a dismayed doubt as to how he was to do his "quarter" towards the painting of the school-house, and redeem Porcupine Point from its reputation as the mean end of the town. Chopping wood was good to give one an idea, even better than whittling, Manuel thought, although he had taken to the latter like a born Yankee; but no new way would it now help him to devise to earn a few honest pennies for the painting of the school-house. He was strolling down the lane that night after supper whittling the toughest pine knot he could find, in search of a plan, when he heard young Gustavus Nickerson shouting to him.

Young Gustavus stood upon a sand dune, his small, stocky figure outlined against the sunset sky, and pointed down towards the Striped Marsh.

"Whale! Whale come ashore on the Striped Marsh beach!" he shouted.

Now on his first arrival in Scauset there had been many jokes and tricks played upon the little Portergee—a matter made easy by his ig-

norance of the Cape speech and customs, and Manuel thought that young Gustavus was now attempting something in that line.

"Can't fool this Portergee now!" he said to himself, with satisfaction.

"Big one!" shouted young Gustavus, and looking in the direction of his outstretched chubby fist, Manuel saw a huge black bulk lying just where the grayness of the Striped Marsh beach joined the grayness of the low-down twilight sky.

Now whales in the great deep were common to Manuel's sailor experience, but a whale tossed upon Scauset's tame and sandy shores!—that was an event, and an event was something for quick wits to turn to account.

Manuel's spidery legs made quick work of the space that lay between him and the Striped Marsh's sands.

It was a big fish and the cruel harpoon that had done its work—whether slowly or quickly, or in what far-off seas, no one could say—was still sticking in its side.

The equinoctial storm had been raging for several days, and there had been fierce winds and high tides, and the great creature had been

carried over Porcupine Ledge and over the shoals, and landed high and dry upon the sands.

"I'm goin' to tell the fellers!" shouted young Gustavus.

Manuel shook his head at him with great violence, and then beckoned imperatively. Gustavus slid down the dune, and arrived on the beach covered with sand and shining in the sunset like a small granite pillar. He found Manuel in an inverted position, his heels waving wildly in the air; a great idea often had an effect like this upon him. But he always turned his somersaults in private, and he now came upright with a little embarrassment, which, however, was soon lost in eagerness.

"We will rope him in! Speak not of him for your life!" He hooked the small Gustavus, as if he were a fish, with his forefinger under the collar of his flannel blouse. "No one has seen it—is so far out of the way. They will come to see when we advertise big whales! We charge ten cents admission inside the rope, children half price, no deadhead, no compliment!"

The twinkling black eyes of the small Gustavus dilated.

"Is it your land?" he asked, for the Cape mind, even in youth, foresees quickly a possible difficulty. Manny wrinkled his brow anxiously and paced off the land with careful strides.

"It is our land; the turtle rock is the boundary!" he said, with a clearing brow and a long sigh of relief, as he pointed to the one small rock that raised itself from the sand. "Cap'n 'Siah will give me leave, and we will rope in the whale, and with the money we get we will paint the school-house! It is Porcupine Point that will paint him, all itself!"

The small Gustavus's face fell slightly; a wild vision of unlimited peanuts and candy had appeared before him when this money-making scheme was proposed; he turned from it reluctantly at the claims of public spirit.

"Everybody will know that we painted the school-house, won't they?" he said, comforting himself manfully.

"Yes, and you shall take the money at the door—the rope," said Manuel, encouragingly; for he understood that when one is small there may be moments when manly pride and the joy of performing a manly part in the world are less satisfactory than peanuts.

They went at once to secure Cap'n 'Siah's permission to rope in the whale. They did not even linger to take a complete survey of the prize, which did not in all points satisfy Gustavus's ideas of a proper "jography" whale. But it was so large that he thought the admission should be fifteen cents instead of ten, as Manuel proposed; size being as every one knows, the essential thing in a whale.

"A whale?" repeated Cap'n 'Siah, when Manuel had, with a breathless eagerness quite unusual to him, told of the wonderful flotsam. "There hain't nobody been foolin' you, has there?" Cap'n 'Siah was reading the Patriot, with a candle in his hand. He pushed his great steel-bowed spectacles high up on his seamy forehead. "You want to rope in the Striped Marsh beach? Good nater! what do you want to do that for? You ain't layin' claim to the Atlantic Ocean, be you?"

Manuel explained, in the soft, slow voice that did not disguise his eagerness, that he meant to paint the school-house with the whale.

When his somewhat slow perceptions had really taken in the whale, Cap'n 'Siah's eyes twinkled.

"Land sakes! Whale oil is good for consid'able many things, but I never heard of makin' it into paint! Well there! go 'long and rope in what you're a mind to. But look a-here!" he called, as Manny turned hastily away lest, as sometimes happened with Cap' n 'Siah, the permission should be revoked. "Don't you go to gettin' yourself or me into any kind of trouble. You ain't so smart but what there's consid'able many things you've got to learn yet!"

The little Portergee's face reddened with indignation. Get them into trouble, indeed! As if he didn't know better than that!

"There's a sight of whales in the Lord A'mighty's great deep, and a good many Cape Cod folks have seen em," continued Cap'n 'Siah. "Mebbe they're goin' to pay their hard earnin's to see one, but I ain't so sure of it."

"You hain't got any rope!" remarked Gustavus. "It will take a lot."

"I'm going over to the rope-walk to get some," said Manuel.

"Over beyond Tooraloo? Eight miles? It won't be any use to rope him in after everybody has seen him," said Gustavus, anxiously.

"To-night," Manuel said.

"Rope costs a lot," pursued young Gustavus, with the practical mind.

"You're only small; you'd better go home," said the little Portergee, the nervous tremor in his voice showing why he was cruel. Then, repenting, he threw his arm about the younger boy's shoulders. "The rope-man knows me; I have buy of him rope for the Delight, my boat. I hope he trust me. Now you tell nobody of the whale! I wake you up with pebble in the morning, and together we will rope him in!"

Young Gustavus was dreaming that, instead of trusting Manuel, the rope-maker had hung him, and was about to hang him also, while the whale stood up very tall upon his tail and looked on approvingly, when there came a rattle of sand against the window, and there, in the dim light of the early morning, stood Manuel, with a wheelbarrow piled high with rope.

"The stakes to drive in they are all down there at the beach," he said; and young Gustavus, looking at him admiringly, saw that his small, dark face was grimed with dirt and perspiration. But he was not too tired to drive

stakes. Gustavus, too, worked with all his small might.

Caddy appeared unexpectedly with breakfast—that was just like Caddy—and young Josiah and little Israel, her brothers, the latter struggling with an unworthy envy of the discoverer of the whale.

"I have to tell them about it," Manuel explained to his partner. "I stay with them, and they are now my people. I do all to take care of them that are so good to me. The good Cap'n 'Siah, though he have bump of caution so tall" —Manuel held his hand above his thickly thatched poll to the height of Cap'n 'Siah's wen—"he only laugh about the whale, though he say not to get ourselves into trouble. How, indeed, should we get ourselves into trouble?" And Manuel laughed light-heartedly.

He laughed again when Caddy warned him not to drive the stakes near Asher Baker's cranberry-meadow, which adjoined the Striped Marsh; as if he had not measured with care.

He and Caddy together had printed the letters on the great placard to be placed outside the rope, and on the small ones to be posted everywhere about the village. Manuel had not been

so confident of his own powers in that line since he had painted a boat's name "Delight" for "Daylight." The placards set forth that a large whale was on exhibition on the Striped Marsh beach, the proceeds to be devoted to the painting of the Scauset school-house.

Caddy wished to call the whale a grampus on the bills, a name she had found in the dictionary, but yielded to the practical view of young Gustavus that if you didn't call things by their right names the fellers might say it was a cheat.

Would people come to the show? There was scarcely a half-hour of doubt after those bills had announced it! Striped Marsh beach was far from the main road, and few vessels passed inside Porcupine Ledge, so that neither by sea nor by land had the whale as yet been discovered.

They came at first by twos and threes, then by dozens, in swarms—men, women, and children! It is not every day that anything happens in Scauset, and there was a vacation because the leaky roof of the school-house was being repaired; it was that which had raised the question of painting.

They came from Scauset and Barnsteeple and Welford; they came until, inside the rope

and outside the sea, there was not space to hold them! And Jo Fretas, friend and compatriot of Manuel's, went to Kingstown in the Delight and brought excursionists to the show. No "deadhead" or "compliment," either; if that rule was not so rigidly adhered to but that some old iron, a very ancient gun, and some dilapidated jack-knives were received as entrance-fees, why, that was only in the cases of intimate friends in extremely embarrassed circumstances.

At the end of three days—when there was a painful necessity that the whale should be sold to a man from the rendering-works who would give ten dollars for it—there were forty dollars, chiefly in dimes and nickels, in Caddy's old coffee-canister, lent for the occasion, and in the little Portergee's breeches pocket! The ten dollars paid for the whale Manuel felt should belong to young Gustavus, who had been its discoverer, but that young person and his parents insisted that it should also go towards the painting of the school-house. Cap'n Seba Oakes had offered to buy the rope at first cost for his son-in-law's vessel, so there were fifty dollars for the painting of the school-house! And Person Green, the painter, whose price

was sixty dollars, caught the prevailing public spirit aroused by the little Portergee, and offered to do the painting for fifty.

And every one was patting Manuel on the back, and Cap'n 'Siah's very wrinkles radiated pride as he admitted that he was "some smart for a little Portergee."

Alas and alas! On the very day when Person Green set up a scaffolding around the school-house to begin the painting, Asher Baker came home from Rockton, where he had been to try to sell to the shoe-manufacturers his pegging-machine that wouldn't peg. He was always inventing machines that wouldn't work —to get rid of working himself, his neighbors said.

"Cap'n 'Siah to Asher Baker, Dr. To Damiged Cranbries, all Trompled over to See the Wale to Ten barils at six Dollars a Baril— $60!!!"

That was the bill which Asher Baker presented within two hours of his return. Cap'n 'Siah turned pale even to the wen on the top of his head when he read the bill, and Manuel grew scarlet. He stammered that no stakes had been driven on Asher Baker's land, that, as

every one knew, Asher Baker never picked his cranberries; he never flooded them to protect them from the frost, or barricaded them from the high tides; that he said they were a poor kind. But being excited, Manuel lost his grip of English, and made but little impression on Cap'n 'Siah.

"I've been tellin' you what you'd come to 'long of your foolhardiness," scolded Cap'n 'Siah, shrilly. "You're a hilter-skilter little Portergee, without a mite nor a grain of sense, and 'tain't any more than was to be expected that you'd get me into diffikilty!"

Young Gustavus Nickerson pulled at Manuel's jacket from behind, setting up a mighty roar.

"Have we got to be shet in jail till we've paid it all up, and ain't we goin' to paint the schoolhouse nor nothin'?" Manuel tore himself away and disappeared behind the wood-shed. He could bear everything but young Gustavus's wail. The neighbors conferred long together, with sighs and head-shakings and sympathy for Cap'n 'Siah, though he "hadn't ought to 'a' been took in by a little furriner like that."

Their voices reached the ears of Manuel, who was having a rather bad time behind the wood-

shed—a worse time even than when he had found that all the herring-boats were in ahead of him at the Boston wharves. But suddenly he was seen to run very fast down the road.

"There! He's runnin' away with the money! You won't never see him again!" cried Cap'n Seba Oakes, and he was so excited that his wooden leg seemed likely to run away all by itself.

Cap'n 'Siah stood very erect, though he trembled and wiped his bald head. "No, he ain't runnin' away," he said, almost solemnly; "he ain't that kind of a little Portergee."

There was a lawyer at Kingstown who befriended Manuel Silva's countrymen, of whom there were many in the town. Before nightfall Manuel had confided to him his difficulty, and received a little information without which he had not thought it prudent to carry out a plan that had occurred to him. The result was that the next day there were cranberry-pickers on Asher Baker's meadow engaged by Manuel Silva, who had paid Asher's bill against the town—Michael Fretas, Jo's uncle, had lent ten dollars—and received an extra written assurance from Asher that he had no further claim

upon the "trompled" cranberries. "If you can get enough for a pie, why, I don't begrudge you," Asher had added, delighted at his own shrewdness.

The Delight went to Boston with nine barrels of cranberries and a fair wind. There was a friend of Manuel's in Boston, the foreman of the canning-establishment where he sold his herring, who knew the market, and the cranberries sold for eight dollars and a half a barrel.

Nine times eight and a half! All that money, except Michael Fretas's ten dollars, for the school-house, for the cranberry-pickers were Porcupine Point boys and girls who were eager to do the work for the school-house.

It paid for putting a belfry on it, too, and then—what do you think? The town fathers voted to have a bell! They were not going to be outdone in local pride by a little "furriner" like that!

Cap'n 'Siah strutted about a good deal, even his bald head beaming with delight; when people praised Manuel's "smartness," he admitted modestly that he was "a public-spirited little Portergee."

CHAPTER III

THE CASTING AWAY OF THE DELIGHT

"WHAT's that little Portergee of yourn up to, now times are so dull?" inquired Cap'n Seba Oakes, sitting with Cap'n 'Siah Doane upon the wood-pile and prodding the sand gloomily with the wooden appendage, not unlike an inverted base-ball bat, which served him for a leg. Times were, indeed, dull at Scauset; both the stocking factory and the glass factory, a little further up the cape, had shut down; the market was glutted with the fish to be found near home; there had been great storms, and some of those who had tried their luck as far off as the Grand Banks, alas! would never come home.

Manuel, who was nearly seventeen now, was certainly not to be relied upon for great wisdom in anxious times. He had, however, a sturdy courage, and he had shown, unexpectedly now and then, what Cap'n 'Siah called,

with modest pride, a little streak o' common sense that had won the not too lightly given Cape Cod respect. There was real interest in Cap'n Seba's tone as he inquired what the little "Portergee" was "up to."

"Manny, he's mackerelin'." Cap'n 'Siah gave a little hitch to each of his trousers legs preparatory to sitting down on the side of his row-boat, pulled up to the wood-shed for repairs. "The market's glutted, but he keeps right at it. You see, the Delight is so terrible fishy that the summer folks wont go sailin' in her nohow. Fact is, he'd ought to keep her fer one thing or t'other, and there ain't enough of one thing or t'other so's't he can afford to. But he ain't discouraged—or, if he is, he don't say nothing about it."

To say nothing about it when he was discouraged was a habit of Manny's, and an uncommonly good habit it is, too.

"It don't appear to be our app'inted way to have any smooth sailin' in this world," said Cap'n Seba, dolefully. "If your boat don't run kerchunk ag'in' a rock, why, there ain't no market for your fish when you get 'em."

"Manny calc'lates he's got such big mackerel

that they're bound to sell," said Cap'n 'Siah. "He won't never give in, Manny won't. He's got 'em all barrelled up with ice, and he's terrible afraid that that bank of fog hangin' off there to the east'ard will hender him from gettin' off by daylight to-morrow mornin'."

"Fog is a resky thing to calc'late on," said Cap'n Seba, solemnly shaking his head.

"Manny he's plannin' to take 'em all up to Boston agin," said Cap'n Siah, twitching his trousers legs in an embarrassed manner, and avoiding his friend's eye, "It's terrible foolish and light-minded. They never thought of going till that time of the great herring catch, when he carried me off, too, unbeknownst." Cap'n 'Siah took off his hat, looking curiously shamefaced, and proud and delighted, too. "'Twas a smart thing to sell them little herring for sardines after the market was overstocked. Ever since that time they've had a notion of goin' to Boston ag'in, young Josiah and Israel and Caddy—Caddy, that's seventeen, and always been real sensible. Manny he argys that it will take a considerable while for him to sell them big mackerel to the best advantage, and 'twill be a good chance for

the youngsters to see Boston. Caddy she's cooked up, so's't won't cost nothin' extry, and if they have to, 'twon't hurt 'em to sleep aboard the Delight. Me? No, I ain't goin'. Gran'sir and Gran'marm Fretas are goin'. Yes, 'tis kind o' ridickerlous, but they was some light-minded before ever Manny come; 'tis the way with Portergees. And Gran'marm hain't ever been to Boston. Jo Fretas is goin', too, so there ain't any danger."

"I'm afraid you're a-worshipin' graven images, dependin' so much on that boy," said Cap'n Seba, wagging his head solemnly. "He's come nigh gettin' you into trouble more'n once."

"But he hain't done it!" replied Cap'n 'Siah, with a triumphant air. "He's got a head-piece, Manny has." But nevertheless the seams deepened in Cap'n 'Siah's worn old face, and he looked anxiously toward the dark drifting bank along the eastern horizon.

The little "Portergee" looked anxiously at the fog-bank at four o'clock the next morning. But the wind—fair for Boston!—would not bring the fog in rapidly.

They were all at the landing early; Jo Fretas, with his fiddle—it was a Scauset tradition that

Jo could fiddle for a breeze more successfully than any one could whistle for it—Caddy, with her baskets of goodies; Grandma Fretas, a dear, little old lady with snapping black eyes in a face like a baked apple, wrapped in a strange gay shawl that had come from Portugal many and many years before; and Grandsir Fretas, looking like a queer and astonishingly sunburnt Yankee, with a very old-fashioned tall hat, and a carpet-bag. The carpet-bag contained his own compass, but this was not to be made known to Manny, for the sake of his feelings. The Delight's cargo consisted of many barrels of mackerel, and fishlike odor was inevitable; but the passengers had smelled fish all their lives, and were not fastidious like the summer visitors. In fact, young Josiah, who was developing a trading bump, sat upon a mackerel-barrel and figured up the probable profits, and little Israel stood upon another, that he might have a wide view of the waters and possibly discover a whale.

A fair wind! It filled the Delight's sails gloriously, and she skimmed the water like a bird. What mattered that sly, creeping fog? Before it could catch them they would have

passed Minot's Ledge light, they would be almost in Boston harbor.

But a sailor, even so young a one as Manuel Silva, should have known that one cannot reckon upon the tricky wind! It veered suddenly; it carried them inshore, and that creeping fog flew now inshore after them.

It caught them as in a net; it shrouded them and held them fast. And they were not quite certain that they had yet got beyond Scauset Shoals; it was doubtful whether they were in danger of getting upon the shoals, or upon little barren, low-lying Horseshoe Island, or upon Hornet Ledge.

They "hove to" for a while; but Manny's heart was sick with the thought of his fresh mackerel that were not likely to be fresh when they reached the Boston market. The fog lifted a little, and the wind was fitful. They set all sail again and steered straight for Boston harbor. Grandsir Fretas, who had known that coast ever since he was a young man, was sure that, if it was a little thick, they could navigate the Delight safely between the dangers that lay in wait to trip her up.

Manuel wasn't going to be more afraid than

Grandsir Fretas was! It grew thicker and thicker; you couldn't see the boat's length before her; and all at once her keel grated harshly, there came a sickening lurch, and there was the Delight, with a cargo of twenty barrels of fresh mackerel and a lot of passengers bound for a Boston holiday, stuck hard and fast on the low sandy beach of Horseshoe Island.

"Now you've done it!" said young Josiah, gloomily, to Manuel. Young Josiah, was inclined to take life hard, like his grandfather, and the prospective profits on those mackerel had reckoned up well. José, the newly arrived Portuguese, a big fellow, whom Manuel had hired to help handle the cargo, wept freely in his grimy yellow silk handkerchief, and Grandsir Fretas said—just think how unfair!—that such a thing had never happened to him, though he had followed the sea for more than forty years, and that the young Portuguese were not as smart as the old ones.

Grandma Fretas, who was dozing in the tiny cabin, awoke and anxiously inquired whether they had got to Boston, as she wished to be sure to arrive in her best cap, which was in her handbag.

Jo Fretas got out his fiddle, which was not such a bad thing to do, although Manuel did think that Jo would better be helping him to consider how to get the boat off; and Caddy set about getting luncheon, to hearten them up, she said, although it was not yet time.

They all ate but Manny. The lump in his throat conquered him when he tried it. He had hoped so much from those mackerel, finer, he was sure, than any that had been seen in the Boston market that season.

"It is for the good Cap'n 'Siah that I feel," he confided to Jo Fretas. "He have anxiety in the top of his head," for Manny could never believe that Cap'n 'Siah's wen was not the cause of his anxious mind; "and if I make castaway now he will not believe that I take care of him, of all that have been like my own people to me, though times are bad."

"When the tide comes in it may lift her off." Jo stopped fiddling long enough to offer this consolation.

"But somewhere in the sand there is rock! She bump and she bump! She will have hole in her side. There is but one way—to throw overboard her cargo!" Manny said this firmly,

although the grayish pallor of his clear-cut, tawny face showed what it cost him.

The big Portuguese made eloquent gestures of despair.

"I know it must be; it is why I weep," he said.

Grandsir Fretas had gone into the cabin with his wife and Caddy, for the fog had turned to a drizzle now, and the air was chilling. Manuel closed the cabin door softly but firmly behind Grandsir.

"It is as well," he said. "And though I lament that the good God have made him deaf, yet—"

Overboard went the barrels of mackerel one after another, and yet the Delight did not raise her keel from the sand. Not until the last barrel had gone, and part of her ballast as well, did she slip past the grating rock out and into clear water.

"Not a cent of money out of the mackerel, and we ain't going to Boston at all!" wailed young Josiah, despairingly. Little Israel choked back a sob with an effort that wrung Manny's heart; for he had promised himself that he would always stand between little Israel and the

troubles of life. He went and sat down beside the big Portuguese sailor, who was refreshing himself with a pipe.

"If only the barrels had been headed up, we might now pick up some," he said, mournfully. "We will go and pick up some empty ones, since we can nothing else do."

They were at anchor, and they put off in the row-boat to pick up the empty barrels, Manuel and young Josiah and the Portuguese sailor. The fog was very thick as they rowed about. The tooting of horns from passing vessels came to them through it, and the strains of Jo Fretas' violin as he mournfully played "Home Again."

They had pursued one bobbing barrel upon the soft sandy shore, and suddenly young Josiah cried out:

"My! but that must be a whopper of a clam! See what a spurt!"

As the boys stepped upon the shore, the clams, after the manner of their kind, sent up tiny jets of water through the sand.

Manny dug with heels and hands. The clam was "a whopper!" So were most of the others which they all fell to digging with a will. Man-

uel stood upright suddenly over his heap of clams, the blood aglow in his sharp, tawny face, and his eyes shining.

"I promise holiday, and I make him!" he cried. "I know where there is market for clams like those, so big as Duxburys, and more so! We will fill all the barrels we pick up—the Delight herself we will fill!"

Grandsir Fretas was unbelieving. He looked at the row-boat full of the great clams, and said that he'd been thirty years alongshore, and never heard of clams on Horseshoe Island. If he hadn't brought his own compass he should think they had struck somewhere else. Anyhow, clams were "resky." He had known many a man to carry a cargo of clams to Boston and come home with an empty pocket. And with that fog hanging round, it wasn't likely that the clams would reach Boston before they were spoiled. One would really have thought that Grandsir Fretas had a wen like Cap'n 'Siah.

But Manny would not be discouraged. He said they would "make holiday," anyway; that Caddy had made much good cakes that would hold out long. If the provisions should give

out before they reached Boston, why—Manny turned pale a little at that thought. He thrust his hands into his pockets, but there issued therefrom only the feeble jingle of two nickels —the times had been so hard! But he finished his sentence bravely—why he had the reputation good; many would trust him.

It was not "making holiday" to dig and load the clams. They were very tired; but it was very cheering that at nightfall, just when one could least expect it, a light wind arose and beat back the fog—the same fair wind that had started them so gayly in the morning. And all that night, taking turns at the watch, they sailed the Delight steadily up the bay toward Boston.

Grandsir Fretas had a troubled dream in the stifling little cabin of the Delight. He dreamed that Manuel had turned into a huge clam, and was swimming back to Horseshoe Island with his tall hat on, which fitted his head curiously well, and his compass under his arm. And he awoke and told his wife that he had warned Cap'n 'Siah against adopting that boy, for the young Portuguese were not like the old ones, and if they didn't

get cast away again before they got home he should be surprised.

The next time he awoke the sun was shining brightly, and the Delight lay at a wharf—not a Boston wharf. Grandsir Fretas rubbed his eyes in bewilderment, and then recognized one of the seashore resorts in Boston harbor, although it had increased tenfold in size in the few years since he had seen it.

"I would have ask you of the opinion," said Manuel, modestly, "but you sleep. There are seven-ten hotels here. To-morrow is Saturday, when they have the monster clam-bake. It is why I come here that I see often in Boston the signs, 'monster clam-bake.' I say to myself that I bring them monster clam. Already they bid against each other for the clams—the seven-ten hotels. Bŭt I—I have reputation; I ask only good fair price in cash." Manuel thrust his hands again into his pockets; a rustle of bank notes came from them instead of the feeble jingle. "I invite you all to breakfast at the hotel," he added, a little grandly, for Manny was but human; "reduce rates for business man."

From the piazza of the Putasket House a

puffing, snorting little porgy-boat was to be seen making its way up to the wharf. They didn't even look at it—Grandma Fretas, who was telling a lady guest all about her old home in the Azores, and Caddy, who was learning of another guest a new crochet stitch—one could see porgy-boats at Scauset. The bands were playing, and young Josiah and little Israel were going around on the flying horses. They were all "making holiday," while a carpenter was attending to that little rub on the Delight's side that might mean a leak.

Cap'n 'Siah, in his every-day clothes, and with his forehead in a hard knot, stepped from the porgy-boat and to the hotel piazza.

"I heard you was cast away on Horseshoe Island. Jeff Nickerson said he ketched sight of the Delight in the fog, but he darsn't go anigh. The porgy-boat come along bound for Boston, and I come aboard. I was considerable anxious." Cap'n 'Siah mopped his forehead, and his worn features worked. "We went nigh enough to Horseshoe to see that you wa'n't there, but there was no tellin' what might have happened." Cap'n 'Siah had his arm around young Josiah and little Israel now, and he held

them fast. "Where—where's Manny?" he asked, huskily.

"He's in the hotel office. Here he come," said Grandsir Fretas.

Manuel threw his arms around Cap'n 'Siah's neck and kissed him. That is not the way of Cape Cod boys, and Cap'n 'Siah was a little embarrassed.

"That you should be trouble, all the money and the holiday they are not worth it!" cried Manny, a boyish sob breaking his voice as he thrust his bills into Cap'n 'Siah's gaunt, trembling hands. "But no more shall the hard times give you trouble. I have sign contract to bring all the monster clam on Horseshoe Island to the hotel man."

Cap'n 'Siah turned away his head and blew his nose hard. "Ain't he the beatermost little Portergee for 'lightin' on his feet?" he said.

"He have the good head and the good heart," answered Grandsir Fretas. "And he let no chance slip him by."

CHAPTER IV

A GREAT HAUL

When Manuel asked the Captain's consent to the purchase of a share in the new fish-weirs around the Point, the Captain shook his head and wiped the top of his head despondently.

"You're nothin' but a little Portergee, after all, Manny," he said, candidly, "and for them that are wiser than you a common net and a fish-line has been good enough. You're doing middlin' well carryin' the big clams from Horseshoe Island up to the summer resorts, but that ain't a business that's going to last, and there's a hard winter comin'."

"It is why I think still of the fish business," said Manny, looking down and meditatively picking up gravel stones between his bare toes. "The mackerel are now scarce, and there is a demand in the market. And there have been no weirs near the Point until now. The fish

are not wary. True Nickerson he expect a great many fish. And the money that he demand to go share it is not much, for I go share also with my boat, the Delight, to carry the fish to Boston."

"Carry the fish to Boston! Good land, you hain't got 'em yet!" exclaimed Cap'n 'Siah, impatiently. "Now look-a-here, Manny, you're an enterprisin' little Portergee, but there's such a thing as being too enterprisin'. You put your money between your feather-bed and your mattress, and there 'tis in time of need; but you set it to ketchin' fish, and maybe you'll ketch 'em and maybe you won't, that's my opinion. But look-a-here," he called, as Manny turned away with his head still bent—"I ain't sayin' that the money ain't your own hard earnin's, that you've a right to do as you're a mind to with; and heretofore, doin' as you was a mind to, you hain't never come out at the little end of the horn. And I—I hain't no real objection to your spendin' your money on them new fish-weirs if you think it's best."

Good Cap'n 'Siah coughed from embarrassment and blew his nose hard. He feared that he was encouraging that little Portergee to be

"resky," as his friend Cap'n Seba Oakes warned him, but so far Manny's ventures had turned out pretty well; he seemed to have a knack of turning his failures into successes. That could not always be done with failures, thought Cap'n 'Siah; in fact, he had never been able to do it at all. Manny was somehow different, but Manny would before long "run agi'n a snag," as Cap'n Seba prophesied.

Cap'n 'Siah watched with a troubled gaze the slender little figure trudging sturdily off through the fog to True Nickerson's. For Manny had the money in his pocket, having felt quite sure that Cap'n 'Siah would give his consent finally to its investment in the fish weirs.

In truth, Manny himself felt some doubt about this investment. He was learning that the faculty of making money was useless without the faculty of taking care of it. And he was so proud and happy that he had been able to bring comfort and plenty to the little house at the Point, to the dear people who had shared their scanty stores with him. If he should fail them now with a hard winter coming on, how should he be able to bear it?

"And yet my business require more than net

and line. Business is always sometimes risk; without the stout heart no man do him," said Manny, aloud, although there were only sea-gulls to hear him. And he straightened himself up, and his bare feet took a firmer hold of the sandy ground as he walked.

Within an hour he was joint owner with True Nickerson of the new fish-weirs. And it was the very next week—Monday morning early—that he found the great haul in the weirs. A great haul—that was what Jo Fretas called it in derision. Jo had not entertained a great opinion of "that weir business." Manny was on board the Delight with José, the big Portuguese sailor, who was a new arrival at Scauset that summer, and who often formed with Manny the whole crew of the Delight. Manny cherished hopes of a few barrels of mackerel to carry to Boston. It was the last run of mackerel, and prices were high. And clams were in less demand at the Putasket hotels, as the summer visitors began to depart. Manny felt that something must be done.

"A great haul—mackerel!" called Jo Fretas, pointing to the weirs. And Manny's heart thrilled. He had a vision of twenty barrels,

like those fine ones which he had been obliged to throw overboard when the Delight went ashore on Horseshoe Island. Twenty barrels, at how much a barrel, now? It made one almost dizzy to reckon.

It was a beautiful morning in late August, and many pleasure-boats were hovering about the Point as Manuel sailed the Delight towards the weirs. He feasted his eyes upon a yacht he had seen the day before in Kingstown Harbor. What a beauty she was! Clean-cut and graceful from bow to stern, and she sat upon the water like a bird. Manuel dearly loved his clumsy, fishy old Delight, but one of these days he meant to own a yacht like that. Good luck at the weirs might fulfill his hope before long.

There were two small sail-boats and three or four row-boats near the weirs, and a chorus of shouts came from them to Manny's ears. He heard the word mackerel, and he tossed up his cap and shouted as the Delight came around in sight of the weirs. He desired to be calm and dignified, as became a business man, but the reaction was too great from that fit of chilling doubt and prudence which Cap'n 'Siah had brought upon him.

Mackerel, indeed! A huge horse-mackerel, the largest one that Manny had ever seen—a creature that reminded him of the Striped Marsh whale, lay motionless upon the dried-in netting. There were other trapped fishes—small mackerel and cod—but the great "tunny" had apparently been there longer than any, and looked as if it were quite dead.

Young Josiah was on board the Delight, and so was young Gustavus Nickerson, who was wild with delight, as he saw in the tunny material for another show. But what help could they afford, thought Manny, in dismay. And big José, although he was strong, was not a skilful manipulator of the weirs. But one must not flinch; especially, surrounded by boats, with the people on the fine yacht looking on, one must be master of the situation.

The blood had rushed to Manny's face under its coat of tan, but he gave orders in a calm voice to José, who seemed to be muttering his prayers in Portuguese, and might be expected at any moment to weep. But it could be said for José, that his tears never interfered with his usefulness, and although his wits were not nimble, he could be trusted to obey orders.

The end of the mainsail halyards was made fast to the tunny's tail, and the bight was tied to the main-sheet traveler. Manny longed for True Nickerson, who knew all about weirs, and presumably about big horse-mackerel, although Manny had heard it remarked from more than one of the neighboring boats that no such tunny as that had ever been seen in those parts.

Gustavus gave vent to his excitement by turning a somersault upon the deck while the rope was being tied to the tunny's tail, and young Josiah had taken out his pencil to calculate the profits of a show, when he was called upon to help bail in fish from the netting. They worked with a will—Manny, José and young Josiah—until suddenly the stanch little Delight settled as if she were going to the bottom.

The stern sank until it was level with the sea, and water poured in. Quickly Manuel unloosed the halyards, and the huge tunny, which had been able to use only its forward fins, disappeared. It lay as quiet again as if it were dead.

Manny wiped his brow. His sharp little Portuguese face was white now under its tan.

"I knew he was alive, and you'll never

catch him!" cried young Josiah, with dismal prophecy.

The big horse-mackerel was alive; there was no doubt of it. He started off like a steam-engine, and, as the hat braids tautened, the gaff started aloft. Now the after-end of the gaff was caught beneath the washboard, and this caught end held. There was no time to loosen it; perhaps José might have done it, but he was calling upon the saints instead. There came a noise like the sharp report of a gun, accompanied by a cry of dismay from all the surrounding boats. The gaff had broken, and the hook-gaff as well, and the sail flew aloft, puffed out like a balloon, and with a broken stick.

There was a stiff breeze blowing, and it caught full in the bagging sail. There was a wild chorus from the boats.

"She'll capsize! She'll be down on her beam ends. Get into your tender and cut loose, quick!"

The Delight was on her beam ends; in another moment she would be over; but Manny was not confused by the hoarse cries. His head was always cool and his wits keen in an emer-

gency. He seized José's sharp knife, and severed the halyards with one swift stroke.

Off flashed the huge tunny through the netting, with almost a fathom and a half of halyards tied to his tail.

The Delight righted herself; the sail came down, with only a small rent in it. There was loud cheering from the boats; from the jaunty yacht, that had come almost alongside, there was a clapping of hands and a waving of ladies' handkerchiefs as well.

"Lucky that you had a skilful seaman aboard," said a hearty voice, and Manuel saw that the yacht's tender was close under the Delight's bow, and a gentleman was standing in it, while two jauntily uniformed sailors rested upon their oars, and gazed somewhat critically at the Delight. "Where is the Captain?"

Manuel took off his dingy cap and bowed respectfully.

"You?" exclaimed the gentleman, with a half-puzzled, half-amused frown. "Who managed the boat? Not that big fellow there?" he asked, pointing to José.

"It was I who cut the halyards. When a thing must be there is no more to say," said

Manny, quietly. "But the tunny, so big as this"—he spread his arms out to their widest extent—"I lament him so long as I live."

A subdued sniffle was heard from Gustavus Nickerson. The tunny had meant a show, a paying show. Could a Yankee boy be expected to see it vanish unmoved?

The gentleman surveyed Manuel's small figure and eager face curiously.

"You must be a born sailor. What are you? Spanish—Portuguese?"

"It is my honor to be countryman of the great Colombo," answered Manny, with another bow; his most elegant one this time, which always made the Cape boys stare open-mouthed. Anybody could learn to manage a vessel as Manny did, they thought, but to bow and scrape like that would make a Yankee boy feel foolish.

The gentleman seemed to admire Manuel's manners. He put his hand upon his shoulder kindly.

"I want a good sailor to manage my yacht for a short autumn cruise." He mentioned the wages that he paid—a sum to make a Cape boy, Yankee or Portuguese, feel as if he were dream-

ing, and an outfit of clothing that would last Manny for a year and more. "You would be just the one for me if you were not too young."

"It is a fault, but I mend him," gasped Manny, his dazzled eyes fixed upon the beautiful yacht, his heart bounding with hope.

"You would like it? You love a fine vessel?" asked the gentleman.

"Would I like it?" echoed Manny, his eager face aglow. "I sail him with my heart. And to come home with much wages to soften the hard winter and to make merry the Christmas for Cap'n 'Siah, who have a so anxious bump! See me, how strong I am!" Manny held out his thin, sinewy arms. "And it is in my blood to sail ship, like the great Colombo."

The gentleman laughed, but he asked him many questions about his past life and sailor experiences, and the upshot of the conversation was that he said, impulsively:

"Let us go and find Cap'n 'Siah, and if he consents, you shall be the sailing-master of the Petrel. We have older heads there, but not one so cool and steady in an emergency."

They were rowed to the Point in the yacht's tender, leaving big José and the boys in charge

of the Delight, and the very small cargo of fish that had not been washed overboard when she settled.

At the Point landing they found an excited party about to put off in Grandsir Fretas's old dory—Cap'n 'Siah, Grandsir Fretas, and Jo.

Cap'n 'Siah trembled in all his gaunt frame as he stood leaning against the dory and shading his dim old eyes with his hand to look at the trim row-boat which was bringing Manuel to shore.

"Are the boys safe, Manny?" he asked, huskily. "If you're all safe we mustn't feel a mite bad because the Delight is lost—not a mite bad."

"Lost? Who say she is lost? Show me him!" cried Manny, hotly. "Nothing is lost but a fathom and a half of rope and—and the tunny." Even with such brilliant prospects before him, Manny's face clouded at the recollection of that loss. "So big a mackerel as never was."

"Jo heard that she'd gone down," faltered the old man. "Some thought 'twas kind of resky to let a little Portergee like you maniperlate the weirs."

And Grandsir Fretas shook his head, and said "young Portergees had not the ballast good in their heads."

Now was not that an opportune time for the owner of the yacht to step ashore and tell the story of Manny's courage and presence of mind, and how it had led him to wish to hire Manny to help sail his yacht?

Cap'n 'Siah had to turn his head away to hide the tears of joy and pride that rolled down his seamy old cheeks. Of course he would give his consent, though the time would seem "terrible long" when Manny was away, and he didn't believe that Jo Fretas and True Nickerson and big José and all could manage Manny's fish business while he was gone as well as he managed it himself.

As soon as Manny had been carried off to see the yacht and to be instructed in his new duties, Cap'n 'Siah went in search of his friend Cap'n Seba Oakes, who was always prophesying that the little Portergee would get his protector into trouble.

"It beat all to see him come rowin' home in the yacht's tender and hired to be her sailin'-master—him that's only seventeen—instead of

bein' capsized in the Delight as we heard he was," said Cap'n 'Siah. "It beat all. But wa'n't it jest exactly like that little Portergee?"

A month after, when the Petrel lay for a week at a South Carolina port, and there was time for letters to and from Scauset on the Cape, the following epistle was received by the sailing-master, who looked so elegant in his fine "toggery" that you would scarcely have recognized the little Portergee:

"DEER MANNY,—this is to let You kno that Tomy nickerson most ketched the Tunny fishin' with a Krookid pin on pudden rok, yessir! Us fellers was down by the marsh when Tomy fetched a Screach that Something was dragin Him into the watter. Tomy hung on like anything and then we all Pulled in Yards and Yards of rope. We most had Him but All of a Sudden the rope got Sawd off on a Sharp Rok and off went the Tunny just like He did before. It is a Hard Wurld. We was goin' to have a show and then have Him stufed for you to see Him when You come home. We made a Vow and tatood our Arms to have that Tunny yet so do not Dispare.

"Respecktfully yours,

"GUSTAVUS NICKERSON."

CHAPTER V

THE DISGRACE OF THE LITTLE PORTERGEE

When Manuel came home to Scauset after his cruise, he created something of a sensation. Sailing-master of a yacht and only seventeen! Of course, Scauset was proud of him. Cap'n 'Siah modestly admitted that "so fur forth as he knew, it beat the record."

Manny brought home more money than his fishing-boat, the Delight, had earned even by carrying clams from Horseshoe Island to the "monster" clambakes at the beaches. It was so much money that when Cap'n 'Siah began to prophesy a hard winter Manny would bring it out and count it, and the Cap'n's dismal prophecy would collapse into a chuckle. Manny had come down in the train from Boston to Kingstown, and walked over to Scauset as modestly as if he were not a distinguished person at all.

It was Christmas week, and there was no school. Little Gustavus Nickerson first caught sight of Manny trudging along from Kingstown. Gustavus and his big brother Ludovico were trying to find some Christmas trees in the sparse, sand-smothered Scauset woods to carry to Kingstown to sell.

Little Gustavus's heart thrilled at the sight of Manny, who was especially his hero since they had had a show together on the Striped Marsh beach. He had cherished a hope of recapturing the tunny—the great horse-mackerel that had escaped from the Delight with many fathoms of line attached to him—before Manny should return; but winter had made that an impossibility for the time.

Since there was no tunny, something must be done to give the returning hero a proper greeting. Gustavus's small, excited brain received a sudden inspiration.

His brother Ludovico had gone deeper into the woods, in search of a tree tall and straight enough for a church festival. But Ludovico's coat was hanging upon a tree near Gustavus, and in its pocket was the key of the schoolhouse; for Ludovico was the janitor.

Gustavus hurled one hoarse shout of welcome towards the little Portergee's advancing figure, and then ran to the school-house with the key. The new bell had, for a school-house bell, a great volume of sound. Perhaps its makers knew that it would have to vie with the mighty Atlantic's roar. It rang out loud and deep in the gray December afternoon, and the gulls answered with astonished screams, for they knew as well as any one that school-bells do not properly ring late in the afternoon.

People heard the bell not only all over Scauset, but they heard it at Tooraloo and Fleetwell, for Gustavus rang with a will, and they didn't know what to make of it.

They didn't have fires at Scauset, and so had never established a general system of alarms; but it was natural to suppose that this was a fire-alarm, and Tooraloo, that had a new hose, and Fleetwell, that had a new engine, brought them over the snowy roads to Scauset as fast as horses could gallop.

They reached the village as soon as the slow-going Scauset town fathers gathered, bewildered, from their various occupations, and all rushed together to the school-house, where little Gus-

tavus Nickerson, rosy with excitement and exertion, was still pulling determinedly at the bell.

"What in all natur do you mean?" cried Cap'n Seba Oakes, whose wooden leg had outrun all the sound ones. "Ringin' a fire-alarm and bringin' all the engines in the county here when there ain't any fire!"

Little Gustavus looked wonderingly from one to another of the angry faces.

"Who said it was a fire-alarm?" he demanded, in an injured tone. "I'm ringing because Manuel Silva has come home. They needn't have come." Gustavus pointed a chubby, disdainful finger at the Fleetwell and the Tooraloo firemen. "He isn't their little Portergee!"

Manuel, who, of course, had gone straight to the little house at the Point, had arrived at the school-house by this time with Cap'n 'Siah, who was in a state of great anxiety, having always prophesied that there would be a fire in Scauset before it had so much as a hose.

Manuel, who had grown at least two inches, put his arm around the neck of the discomfited little Gustavus, and with the other hand he made a jingling in his pocket.

"Coffee!" he said, aside. "Scauset will treat the firemen. It is I, Manuel Silva, who will pay."

It was Cap'n Seba Oakes who was off to the store for the coffee, his wooden leg making a small cyclone in the snow. The coffee was made in the school-house. There were crackers and ginger-snaps and cheese from the store as well, and the Scauset housewives sent good things. They all remarked how fortunate it was that it was Christmas-time, and they had been baking. Caddy Doane said she never should have made seven mince pies and frosted her cup-cake if she hadn't felt in her bones that Manny was on the way home.

When they had drunk to Manny's health and the firemen's, and afterwards, at Manny's suggestion, to little Gustavus's—to his blushing delight—Manny had to relate his adventures, and every one felt that his career had done great credit to Scauset. And Cap'n Orrin Saunders, the first Selectman of the town, was so moved that he made a little speech, in which he said that before another distinguished townsman returned from his travels he hoped that Scauset would have a town-hall in which to give him a recep-

tion. Before the reception was over the town had voted to raise money for a hose and a town-hall!

Cap'n 'Siah Doane had headed the subscription list with a goodly sum, and he had done it without once raising his bandana handkerchief to his wen—his anxious-bump.

The Cap'n had put his own name down—Manny had insisted—but every one knew that the money was in the little Portergee's pocket.

"He'll get the big head now! That little Portergee of yourn is sp'ilt for certain," said Cap'n Seba Oakes to Cap'n 'Siah Doane on their way home from the school-house, which seemed a little unkind of Cap'n Seba, considering that he dearly loved a treat, and had eaten more than any one else.

Caddy was afraid he would be spoiled, or at least be made very dandified, by the great quantity of beautiful clothes provided by the owner of the yacht for his sailing-master, handsome, jaunty suits and underwear by the dozen pairs. Manny gave it away generously to young Josiah, and his thirteen-year-old head was thereby so turned that he invented a stretching

machine to make him tall enough to fit the clothes—and came very near to hanging himself with it in the wood-shed one day. But that is not in this story.

What was Manny going to do now? That was the question that was agitating the minds of all Scauset. His fishing business had thriven fairly well under his friends' management, but fishing in the Delight seemed but a small business for Manny now, even if it were the season for it. He might go to the Banks in a large ship—great catches were sometimes brought home from there; but there seemed an icy clutch at poor Cap'n 'Siah's heart when he thought of that—only an old sailor fully realizes the perils of the sea.

It would scarcely have surprised Cap'n 'Siah to see the little Portergee assume command of a Cunarder, and it would have seemed altogether natural that he should be chosen to fill an important position in the merchant service. But even to him Manuel had not yet confided what he meant to do.

Even wilder reports than Cap'n 'Siah's fancies were afloat in Scauset, the product, doubtless, of little Gustavus Nickerson's lively imagination.

Manuel was to be the proprietor of a stupendous show, with Gustavus Nickerson as lion-tamer; he was to organize and own a new line of Cape steamers; and he was to hunt elephants in India.

"What are you going to do now, Manny?"

It was Jo Fretas who boldly asked when the rumors had reached their height, and everybody, especially the boys, had their eyes on Manny.

The boys had cut a hole in the ice to fish for smelts—that wouldn't bite even for Manny—and life in Scauset was felt to be dull. Every boy gazed open-mouthed at Manny while he hesitated a little, slowly loosening the great woolen muffler that Caddy made him wear because his throat had been a little sore.

"I—I will go to school," answered Manny, quietly.

The boys looked startled and incredulous. It must be a joke of Manny's, they thought. That a boy who could do such things as Manny had done—that any boy, in fact, who wasn't obliged to should go to school seemed incredible to the youthful Scauset mind.

If they had been girls there would have been

a chorus of exclamations; the boys only looked at one another.

Little Gustavus strangled, manfully, a wild sob in his throat, tasting already the disappointment of those who pin their hopes upon the great.

"Well, it isn't such a grind since we've got the new schoolmaster," said Smith Saunders, who had more zeal for knowledge than any other Scauset boy, because, as was suspected by his mates, he was too lame to do anything but study. "He kind of wakes you up."

Manuel looked wistfully into Smith's face.

"But it is to the small school that I must go," he said.

"To the small school?" echoed Smith Saunders, in dismay. "Why, the teacher is only Viola Nickerson with her hair done up! And you don't get out of the Third Reader there."

Gustavus gave way to his feelings and roared dismally. His hero, whose magnificent future he had hoped to share, was going to school with him to his sister Viola!

"The arithmetic is in me here," Manny tapped his broad forehead with a roughened, stubby little forefinger. "For all him I could

go to the big school, but the English—to write him and spell him, though I try hard, he get away from me—like the tunny." Manny smiled brightly at Gustavus, but Gustavus could not smile. "They say I must go for long time to the small school."

"With the little lunks, eight or ten years old!" said Bake Atwood, as the boys strolled homeward, leaving Manny and young Josiah to go to their home at the Point alone. "Well, he's only a little Portergee, after all! I don't know why people should expect that he was going to set the river afire!"

If Cap'n 'Siah and Caddy felt any mortification at Manny's interruption of a proud career to go to the small school, they found a compensation in the fact that they should have him at home and out of danger. For the little Portergee had found as warm a corner in their hearts as if he were their own.

They were small desks under which Manny stretched his legs—really beginning to be long legs now, to his great satisfaction; and the teacher was no taller than he, although she had been to the Waterbridge Normal School for two whole terms.

By an arrangement with the committee, Viola Nickerson was to teach him arithmetic in advance of the class, which had only reached vulgar fractions. In fact, Manny assisted in teaching the fractions, for he took little Gustavus, privately, behind the school-house wood-pile, and by cutting up an apple convinced him, as Viola couldn't, that a fourth was more than a sixth.

Little Gustavus seemed to feel keenly the disadvantage of going to school to one's sister; he said it was hard to believe in her 'rithmetic when you knew she put her hair up in papers, and couldn't throw a stone so it would hit even a hen.

Manuel went gallantly on to compound interest and cube root under Viola's guidance; but one day came trouble. There was a problem about a steeple and the shadow that it cast at certain times of the day.

Viola said that Manuel didn't do it right or get the right answer, and Manny insisted that he did. When she ordered him to do it over again in her way, he told her, with his Portuguese blood fiery in his cheeks and his black eyes flashing, that he knew how to solve that problem and she didn't!

It was right before the first class in geography, too, that had been kept after school for having an imperfect lesson.

Viola would have sent for Mr. Dence, the master of the upstairs school, to come down and use his rattan, but it happened that he had been taken suddenly ill, and forced to close his school and go home to Sandham to get well.

So Viola simply sent Manuel home and informed the committee of his unruly conduct, and he was told forthwith that he must apologize to his teacher and perform the example as she directed, or be expelled from school. Manny chose to be expelled! Not Cap'n 'Siah's severe reproaches, nor his assertions that they were a ruined family—ruined by a little Portergee!—nor Caddy's tears could move him.

It was considered in Scauset a very serious thing to be expelled from school, as indeed it should be considered everywhere. Cap'n 'Siah said that poverty was nothing—nothing, compared to disgrace! And his anxious bump seemed to grow before Manny's very eyes.

"What do you think of your little Portergee now?" That was the way in which Cap'n Seba Oakes hailed Cap'n 'Siah in the main street of

Scauset. He shouted like a fog-horn, too, although Cap'n 'Siah was only a little deaf in his left ear.

"You'd better get rid of him if you don't want young Josiah to foller in his footsteps!" added Cap'n Seba in another shout.

Manuel heard. He was playing checkers with Grandsir Fretas, in the back of the store, on the top of a sugar-barrel, where he had marked out a board.

Grandsir Fretas believed in Manuel, but he was so dispirited by his disgrace that he had discarded his tall hat and become really untidy in his appearance. He had been so proud of his young countryman! It was one of the bitterest drops in Manuel's cup to disappoint Grandsir Fretas.

"You'd better get rid of him," Cap'n Seba Oakes had said. That was the way to solve the difficulty, thought Manny, with sudden, desperate resolve.

He loved them all, in the little house at the Point; his warm Portuguese heart clung to them as if they were his very own; he meant to take care of them always. But he would not stay to be a trouble and disgrace to them!

He played so recklessly that Grandsir Fretas captured all his kings at one swoop; then he rushed away, leaving Grandsir Fretas to gather up the checkers.

He was glad to remember, as he ran along the street, that while he played checkers with Grandsir Fretas the school-bell had rung out the noon hour; by this time the scholars would have all dispersed. They called out little taunting jokes that stirred his Southern blood and might get him more deeply into disgrace.

The scholars had all gone, but Cyrus Dence, the upstairs teacher, was coming out of the school-house. He had returned from Sandham only a few days before. He called to Manny, and although Manny was tempted to run on, he crossed the street to the school-house gate instead.

"What is it about the steeple problem?" asked the teacher. And he looked at the little Portergee more respectfully than any one in Scauset had looked at him for many days. "One of your schoolmates has just told me about it. Come up to my room and work it out on the blackboard, just as you did in Miss Nickerson's room."

Manny hesitated. "Perhaps I do him Portuguese, and she has a right to have him done her own way in her own school," he said, slowly.

"I want to see your way!" insisted the schoolmaster.

"It is only for curiosity, and you will not tell?" said Manny, anxiously.

"If you do it right you don't want me to tell?' asked the young man, in surprise.

"I think it all over, and I go away. It is better so," said Manny, quietly. "We are men, you and I; it is not right that we pick upon a girl!"

The schoolmaster laughed until the empty rooms echoed, and the little Portergee stared in somewhat injured astonishment.

"No, I will not tell," said the master, suddenly, seriously; "but it is already known that your answer was right. Nick Atwood saw the key to the arithmetic—in Miss Nickerson's desk."

"I know it!" The little Portergee blushed as if he were the guilty one. "It is only three days since she has it. Nick Atwood told me. I have given him all my smelt poles and hooks and the promise of a gun not to let the committee know—and now he tell you!"

"I'm not the committee. I promised to keep

the secret," answered the young man. "But why is it a secret to be kept? Are you going to let yourself be wronged and disgraced—your friends, too!—because it is a girl who does the mischief?"

"I have think much," said Manny, slowly, "and this is what seem the only way I can do—to go away. They are so poor in the old Striped Marsh house, and with Ludovico lame and the father bedridden, she almost take care of all. If she lose the school there are not even cranberries to pick, in the winter. And Gustavus, her brother, is my heart's friend. I go away, and always I find work and money to send home; I take care of my people still. If it had been a teacher like you, then I would make him take back that I had done the steeple shadow wrong; but she is only Viola Nickerson with her hair done up—and I go away and she have her school."

Cyrus Dence turned his head away for a moment and looked out of the window; whether because he wanted to laugh or to cry I cannot say, but his voice was a trifle husky when he said, "Come! I want to see you work out the problem."

Manny seized the chalk, and disdaining the book the master handed him—would not the steeple-shadow problem remain always in his head?—he quickly did the work, explaining it in his quaint, difficult English.

"Exactly right!" said the master when he had finished. "The principle is different from that by which the others on the same page are done, and Miss Nickerson didn't see it. I doubt whether one of my pupils could have done it without assistance. Stay at home, and come to school to me! Oh, it can be managed! I will give you extra lessons in English."

The little Portergee's face glowed with the eagerness of one who loves knowledge and understands its value. But the glow faded the next moment and the resolute look returned.

"Think of your own people!" said the schoolmaster.

"I think of them, and I will take care of them wherever I am. But she, if she have no school, can do nothing, and Gustavus, my heart's friend, is small. My mind, I have made him up!"

The little Portergee was gone. The school-

master watched, meditatively, the slender figure running fast towards the Point.

In the gray light of the early winter morning the Delight lay off the Scauset pier with all sails set for the favoring wind—quite a distance off the pier, to be clear of the ice that had gathered around the piles and stretched its clogging coat out into the little harbor.

Cap'n 'Siah, arising before light, had found, in the toe of the stocking that he was putting on, the roll of bills that Manny had brought home for the hard winter. Then he knew what had happened.

There was a delay in getting the Delight off. Jo Fretas had a sore thumb, and they had to be careful about the floating ice.

A crowd—really a crowd for Scauset—had gathered on the long pier. Into the midst of it rushed the schoolmistress, not Viola Nickerson with her hair done up now, for it was dishevelled and waved wildly, and the shawl upon her head blew back upon the wind.

"Oh, come back, Manny Silva!" she cried, distractedly. "I know you did it right, and I'll tell everybody! It was mean and wicked, but I've only had the key for a few days—and I

didn't know what we should do if I lost the school! Cap'n 'Siah has fainted, and they can't bring him to, and they're afraid it's a stroke—"

Cyrus Dence's strong voice broke in upon her thin high-keyed one: "Manuel! come back! I'll fit you for college!" he shouted.

"College!" echoed Gustavus Nickerson, with scorn. "He's going to load the Delight up to Boston, some say with lumber for South America, some say with guns for the Cuban fellers! Oh, I wisht he'd took me!"

But the wind that filled the Delight's sails and rattled her cordage drowned all other sounds to Manuel's ears. His voice, young and shrill, came across the water to the watchers on the pier, "I will come back soon!"

But who can say when or how he who goes will come back?

CHAPTER VI

THE HASTY VOYAGE OF THE DELIGHT

THE Delight had sailed out of Scauset's little harbor on a winter day, and no one knew whither she was going.

Viola Nickerson's penitent confession that she had known that she was wrong and Manuel right ever since she bought the key to the arithmetic came too late.

"It's a pretty time to beller now!" her brother, little Gustavus, had called to her with angry scorn, when she stood wringing her hands upon the wharf after the Delight's sails were already spread to the favoring wind.

Manuel had humbled himself to go to the "down-stairs school," and he had meant to learn all that Viola Nickerson could teach him, and perhaps get some new ideas about arithmetic into her head. And if that plan had not failed, he might have known some things that now he

will always miss. In that case, however, the building "boom" might never have come to Scauset.

Off went the Delight with a favoring wind. And big José, the Portuguese sailor, didn't care who saw him weeping on the wharf because Manuel wouldn't take him. One reason why he wouldn't was because José was needed to take care of Grandpa and Grandma Fretas, with whom he lived, and another reason was that he cried too easily. That is a very bad thing anywhere in the world, but especially amid the perils of the deep. Jo Fretas could play the fiddle and sing a merry song when things were rough, and that made him worth more than his wages.

Cap'n 'Siah Doane, who had adopted Manuel before any one had thought of calling him "a smart little Portergee," had found a fat roll of bank-bills in the toe of his blue yarn stocking when he went to put it on.

All the money that Manny had! Caddy knew that, and was worried about him. She turned fiercely upon Cap'n Seba Oakes when he knocked at the door, using the knobby end of his wooden leg for a knocker, as he always

did when he was excited, merely to say that he "expected they'd found out now that adoptin' a little Portergee wa'n't what 'twas cracked up to be."

She had said, sharply, that there wasn't a better boy in this world than Manuel Silva, nor a smarter one, and what they should do without him she didn't know.

And Cap'n Seba had retorted that it "'peared as if they'd have to do without him." Nobody seemed to know where he was going in that little fishing-vessel in the middle of winter. Did she know? Caddy was forced to show, though she wouldn't admit, that she didn't, and Cap'n Seba went stumping off with a little jeering laugh.

If she only knew whither the Delight was bound! To go off without telling them was, she said to herself, the only unkind thing that Manuel had ever done. Cap'n 'Siah and the boys had gone with the old spy-glass, around the Point to keep the Delight in sight as long as possible. She seemed to be headed for Boston, but to what far-off port, to what ends of the earth, might she not sail from Boston?

Little Israel, in a passion of tears cried out,

as people had cried out on the wharf, "Come back, Manny!"

And there were tears mingled with the salt spray on Cap'n 'Siah's seamy cheek.

Manny, usually so sensible, had allowed his wounded pride to carry him into hasty action. He had disgraced them; it was better that they should be rid of him, he had said to himself, a little bitterly. And how could he tell them where he was going, when he did not know himself?

As for Jo Fretas, he did not much care where they went. There was fishing-tackle on board the Delight, and Jo was a born sailor and fisherman, and he found Scauset dull in the winter, and had eagerly accepted Manuel's invitation to a cruise in the Delight. He sang a jovial sea-song as the Delight flew over the sparkling waves. It seemed to be enough for Jo that he

> Knew the merry earth was round,
> And they might sail for evermore.

But Manuel had a wrinkle of responsibility between his brows. And he shook his head when Jo began to get out the lines and bait.

"I am man of family, and I go to make money," he said. "There is no fishing for profit now, except far, far outside, where it is not safe for the Delight to go. When the herring come again—the little herring for the sardine—and the fat mackerel, and it is time for the monster clam-bake—then I have contract, and I fill him."

"Then where under the sun are we going now?" demanded Jo Fretas.

"The Delight can carry freight," said Manuel, calmly. "We make her coaster for the winter."

"But where are you going to get your freight? The Delight is so small, and you're only a boy! It isn't so easy to get into business like that," said Jo Fretas, wagging his head seriously.

Jo might sing merry songs, but he saw practical difficulties, as the Cape mind always does.

Manuel took a reef in the Delight's mainsail before he answered, for the wind was freshening. Then he stood before Jo, drawn up to his full height (which was not so tall as he could have wished), and with the color burning in his thin olive cheeks.

"Have I said it was easy?" he demanded.

"There will be difficulty. I find him always, and I take him so?"—Manny brought his lean little fingers unpleasantly close to Jo's sinewy throat—"and he choke, Listen!" Manny descended suddenly from his dramatic figure to practical details. "I am business man—and you too. Business men have reputation and friends. I go to the canning factory where they buy my little herring, and sometimes my big mackerel, and I say, 'Give me freight for the Delight; she carry it anywhere along the coast.'"

"But they do business on a large scale; they don't want to send their goods along the coast," objected Jo Fretas.

The little furrow deepened between Manny's brows; but he spoke bravely. "There are others; there is much business in the world. And the Delight will do what she say; they all know it. If we can make Boston you will see. But I wish we had taken more provisions."

If provisions were a little short, it was because Manny had wished the wad of bills in the toe of Cap'n 'Siah's blue stocking to be as large as possible. And only some loose change chinked lonesomely in his pocket. Making

Boston didn't seem so easy as it had done at first. The wind was almost a gale now, and the vessel climbed mountains and pitched into yawning gulfs, until even the born sailors grew a little giddy.

She rode the great waves gallantly for such a little vessel, but it seemed likely that at any moment one of the huge ones might swamp her.

Jo Fretas got out his fiddle, and while the Delight scudded with almost bare masts before the wind, he played accompaniments to the rollicking airs he sang.

But the furrow between Manuel's brows grew deeper. The Delight was racing like a greyhound; never in all her business career had she made such time as this between Scauset and Boston. But the early winter darkness was closing in—a thick, starless darkness—and Boston Harbor would be full of shipping; there was danger of collision.

"The harbor! I never thought we should make him before the morning," murmured Manny, in dismay. "And to run inshore where there is no port and we cannot see—that is more dangerous than the harbor."

Jo Fretas played, plaintively, "The Girl I

Left Behind Me." And then he played no more, for the whistling wind drowned the music, and the snow came down in blinding whirls. And the little Delight plunged on, the light at her bow almost obscured by sleet. There were shadowy shapes around them now, like ghosts of vessels, and hoarse cries came to them through the darkness.

Jo Fretas said that if they had gone fishing they should be anchored now off one of the islands as comfortably as could be, which was not quite the kind thing of Jo, but, in truth, he liked a fishing trip better than business, and, not being a man of family, didn't care much if he went home from a cruise without a cent in his pocket, provided he had had a good time.

Manuel said it was one good thing that no vessel would be going out of the harbor on a night like this. But Jo replied sourly that "there was always some simpleton or other going where he had no business to."

And even as he spoke a great shape loomed before them in the darkness, was upon them with a shrieking and a crash, then steered off suddenly, grazing the Delight's side, and leaving her shaking and shivering from bow to stern.

Through the puffing and shrieking of the monster came the sound of voices, and Jo Fretas made a foghorn of his great brawny hands, and shouted a demand to be towed to port in return for the injuries inflicted upon the Delight.

But the monster, unheeding, went its way. And Jo Fretas said he "couldn't help thinking of Gid Freeman, who was crazy enough to go sandin' in the dead of winter in the Mary Jane, and got her all stove to pieces and got a crick in his spine so he hadn't been the same man since." The fact was that when you couldn't fiddle you had to face the situation, and that didn't suit Jo.

Meanwhile Manuel had discovered something that seemed to him far worse than a crick in the spine, and about as bad as anything that could have happened to Gid Freeman's Mary Jane. The Delight had sprung a leak in her side!

This was not a little graze like that which she had received on the rocks of Horseshoe Island the summer before. Water was dripping into the little cabin; it seemed inevitable to both Manuel and Jo that it should soon be pouring in. Jo sang "Heave yo, my hearties!"

—in a somewhat muffled tone, it is true, but that was better than remembering something disastrous.

And just at that moment, when it must be owned Manuel's spirits were at a rather low ebb, the gusty wind blew away the snow, and showed them what seemed a great illumination near at hand on shore.

Manuel rubbed his eyes to be sure that he was not dreaming. "We're going too near; but if it is as I think, there is a safe harbor. It is our monster clambake hotel that so light himself up, and it is not the summer, either."

"Not by considerable it ain't," called Jo, dryly, from below, where he was trying to stanch the Delight's wounds.

The sea-shore resort, so familiar to the crew of the Delight, was deserted in winter. It was no wonder that the illumination made Manuel think he was dreaming.

"She'll go down in less than an hour," called Jo from the cabin, where he was struggling with the in-pouring water. And there were no songs now.

Manuel steered the Delight straight towards the lighted harbor, and as he did so he recalled

an old Portuguese legend of miraculous help given to shipwrecked mariners.

Might it not be that the Heavenly Father knew that he was a man of family? He knew that they were praying for him in the little house at the Point as the wild storm broke upon them.

Not so near to the shore as they had seemed, and the veering, gusty wind beat them back! Both Manuel and Jo were needed to manage the vessel now, and the water gained upon them rapidly. Was the valiant little Delight to go down within sight of the friendly lighted shore?

The wind grew friendly suddenly, just as Manuel was trying to decide, with a cruel pang, whether it was his duty as a man of family to leave his dear Delight to her fate and make for the shore in the tender. It was almost as if the wind and the struggling little vessel obeyed a great shout that went up from the shore. After the shout there sprang up suddenly the blaze of a bonfire. It grew quickly into a big bonfire.

"If we hain't got bewitched, so we're seein' what there ain't there, like shipwrecked folks that I've heard tell of, why, we've struck the

Fourth of July, and that's all there is about it," said Jo Fretas.

By the time the Delight was safely moored the whole little harbor seemed ablaze, and an eager cheering crowd welcomed her upon the wharf.

It was the landlord of the "monster clam-bake hotel" who first seized Manuel in a cordial grip.

"I declare if we'd known that the vessel we saw beating 'round out there was the little Delight, and you and Jo were aboard of her, we'd have made a bigger bonfire—and yet I don't know as we could have, for we burned all the tar-barrels we had," he cried, cordially. "Some fellows down here at the bowling-alley"—he pointed to the long, low building near the shore —"caught sight of the vessel, and thought she was having a hard time of it, and we made up our minds to do what we could to help her. Look here, boys! Think of its being Manny Silva and the Delight."

The boys were the hotel employees of the summer before, and some fishermen who lived alongshore, all Manny's friends, and they cheered so heartily that he was reminded of the

ringing of the Scauset school bell on his return to the Cape.

"What's going on here? Well, it must have surprised you," said the landlord, in answer to Manny's puzzled inquiry. "I'm building an addition to the hotel—making it twice as large; got a large gang of carpenters here, and when the weather is so bad that they can't work—we haven't got to the inside work yet—why, they make things lively. They're quartered in the hotel; that's why it's lighted up. And it looks about as gay here from the water as it does in summer. Lucky for you that it was so."

"It was the good God," said Manny, simply, as he had been taught at home.

Carpenters! Was not that more than luck? They made the Delight as staunch and strong as if nothing had ever happened to her.

And there was nothing to pay. It was time that belonged to him, the landlord said. And they would have been doing nothing else, for, besides the hindrance of bad weather, they had been hindered by waiting for lumber. He had not found vessels to bring it quickly enough for the large gang of men. What did Manuel say to putting the Delight into the carrying trade

for the winter? Although she was small, she was a fast sailer, and the route from Boston was "inside" all the way. And she could earn more than in the fishing trade.

That bargain was soon made. Even Jo agreed that it would be better fun than fishing in the winter.

The next morning Cap'n 'Siah stood by the window of the post-office, which was also the store, to read a telegram that shook in his withered fingers.

Cap'n Seba Oakes stood near by, the centre of an interested group. Every one knew how the little household at the Point had suffered from anxiety through the severe storm; Jo Fretas's friends, too, who were almost all of Scauset, had worried much about the honest fellow. The Delight had been on everybody's lips.

"It's likely the Delight has gone to the bottom, and the bodies have been hove up somewhere," whispered Cap'n Seba, who had a gloomy imagination. "Cap'n 'Siah'll take it hard, and he'll have to pay the funeral expenses, and I guess he'll get about enough of adoptin' headstrong little Portergees!"

"I—I can't bear to read it," stammered poor

Cap'n 'Siah, turning piteously to his friends; and his voice broke in a great sob.

It was little Gustavus Nickerson who took the paper from his hand and read it, in his clear piping voice, in the midst of a breathless silence.

"Gone into the lumber business.—MANUEL."

Not a word more! In truth, there had been unforeseen small expenses—there always are—and the quarter that paid for those five words was the very last of the silver that had jingled feebly in Manuel's pocket. There was a chorus of congratulations. Even Cap'n Seba Oakes looked into his old friend's face and said, quaveringly:

"I'm glad for you, 'Siah; true's you live I be. For if the Lord didn't give you no more sense than to adopt a little Portergee, why, you ain't to blame!"

Cap'n 'Siah looked around proudly upon his friends, and his voice regained its firmness.

"I wa'n't much afraid but what Manny had lit on his feet—seein' he's that kind of a little Portergee," he said; "but—but"—his voice

threatened to break again—"we all know something about the perils of the sea."

Little Gustavus Nickerson had slipped out at the door, with a heart too full for utterance. The lumber business! That meant Cuba or South America (sooner or later they hear at the Cape all that is going on in the great world). On the solitary road that led to his home Gustavus uttered a great babyish "boo-hoo!" Then he looked around ashamed to be sure that no one heard.

There was no sound save the crackling of the tree boughs, heavy with last night's sleet. He would not be a cry-baby! He would instead show up the person most to blame for Manuel's desertion of him! Manuel, who made all the joy of life for him.

That night Gustavus wrote from out of his burdened heart a composition on girls. Compositions were to be read before the committee who visited the schools in the middle of the term. Gustavus had been chosen to the honor of reading a composition before the committee. Viola had hesitated to appoint him, lest she should be accused of partiality to her brother; but it was so well understood that he was pos-

sessed of literary gifts that the scholars insisted that he should be one of the honored few.

Gustavus had begged to decline. The reason was, at first, his disgust that Manuel had been expelled from school. Now he would write it, but he was glad that he had refused, because now Viola would not have to see it beforehand. The committee should hear his composition before any one else.

It was already known that they were not even going to reprimand Viola for that affair of the key, and although she had cried so on the wharf, she was now holding her head as high as ever. Wasn't that just like a girl? Gustavus would like to know.

The writer of the composition could choose his own subject, and for a long time now Gustavus's heart had burned to tell the world what he thought of girls.

He wrote the composition in the privacy of his own small room under the eaves, and although his heart burned, his fingers were numb. And there was need of haste, lest Viola or his mother should see his light through the chinks. Working under these difficulties, he was afraid that he had not made his meaning quite plain—

that the allusions to Viola were too delicately veiled; and he resolved to read it loudly and severely, and to look meaningly at Viola if he thought people were missing the point.

Viola looked very much astonished when he arose, the very first one, in answer to her demand for compositions; and Lucetta Baker, in a pink cashmere dress, and with her hair curled in fine ringlets by the kitchen poker, began to whimper, because she had been promised that she should read her composition first. Viola would have sternly bidden him sit down and await his turn, but old Deacon Ryder, one of the committeemen, said, kindly,

"Let's hear what the young man has to say."

And Gustavus, with his head well up and an apple bloom upon his firm, round cheeks, read his composition on girls. He had a lisp that would not be controlled, but he read in a loud and high-keyed voice:

GIRLS

"Girls are sometimes well-meaning people, but they are a lower order of nature, and they can never hope to be men. God made them, as

he made the cow and the caterpillar, and they must be satisfied. It will not afect a girl's morils to let her do up her hair and keep school. She can be just as mischeevious and more than as if she staid to home and broke all the lamp chimbleys crimping her hair and laid it to the boys. Girls think that boys ought to get found out, but they do not want to get found out themselves. They would rather cheat and drive a honorable young man away from friends and home to tempt the dangers of the raging deep, because he would not tell of her."

Viola's cheeks were blazing by this time, and there was a hysterical lump in her throat which would not let her stop Gustavus when she tried to. And besides the committee there were other visitors on the platform listening to that dreadful boy!

"Up stairs masters do not aprove of a girl that cheats, and they stand up for the good young man, but you will see before the term is over that she will have him coming to see her Sunday evenings, and taking her to singing-school, and he will not know that she has borrowed her brother's egg money out of his green box, when he did not know it, to buy the blue ribbon round her neck tied in a bow behind.

Such is the morils of girls, and boys should learn in the days of their youth to beware of them, such as are not their sisters too, for God has given them sisters to show them what girls are, so there is no excuse for them, and we must not be too hard on them, for they cannot sail a vessel nor play base-ball, and if anybody hits them they cry, so we must pity them, for their intelecks are not like ours."

There was a subdued titter all over the room before Gustavus had finished. Even the old minister's portly person was shaking under his vest. Viola was ready to burst into hysterical sobs, but she choked them back and smiled in a forced and ghastly way. She called hurriedly for the next, and Lucetta Baker read a nice little composition on winter, and Gustavus felt as if his effort had fallen quite flat. He was afraid people hadn't understood that he meant Viola! But when he went home he changed his mind. It was a very bad time, indeed, that little Gustavus had with his mother and Viola, weeping together, and his brother Ludovico sternly reproaching him for disgracing his sister.

Moreover, there was a birch rod hanging behind the wood-shed door, and Mother Nickerson

promised solemnly that she would ply it vigorously the next morning.

But very early in the morning Gustavus, with his small worldly possessions tied up in one of Viola's old gingham aprons, was throwing sand up at young Josiah Doane's window. He was going to Boston to seek Manuel and his fortune; would Josiah go, too?

Young Josiah, though tempted, could not go, for Manuel had bidden him take care of the family in his absence. So, with only his sore and foolish heart for company, Gustavus took the road to Boston to find Manuel and become his partner in the lumber business. A long, long road for short legs, and Boston would be big to a boy whose world had all lain within ten miles of Scauset. Would Manuel ring the bells for him when he got to Boston?

CHAPTER VII

WITH FATE AGAINST HIM

THE Delight, Captain Manuel Silva, was engaged in carrying lumber from Boston to Putasket Beach. It was a job that would last until there was lumber enough for the great new addition to the hotel; and the seventeen-year-old Captain, carefully reckoning profits by the aid of the arithmetic that had "gone into his head" in the Scauset school, decided that it was a job that would pay very well. The hotel proprietor was disposed to do well by the young Captain, and to have faith in him, because the clams that he had brought to him from Horseshoe Island had invariably been "monster" clams, according to agreement.

"One chance he bring another," Manuel said, happily. But Jo Fretas, the mate, thought the business a little slow. Manuel would not let him stay ashore when the Delight lay all night

at a Boston wharf, lest they should not catch the earliest breeze in the morning.

There was no watchman at the hotel, and the workmen were careless with their pipes, and Manuel kept a careful lookout. His room was in the back of the house, and sometimes he had heard queer noises at night in the kitchen and out-building. Probably they were, as the workmen said, only the wild winter winds that went prowling and howling along the coast.

The landlord had business elsewhere, and was away most of the time, and 'Rastus, the husband of Diomeda, who cooked for the men, was addicted to a black bottle, which made him worse than useless as a caretaker.

So it was not strange that Manuel tried to sleep with one eye open, and that he sprang out of bed, only half awake, one night when he heard such very unusual sounds, directly beneath his bedroom, as the clanking of a chain and a baby's cry.

The chain seemed to be dragged along through the out-building, and then Manuel was sure that he heard it clanking into the great kitchen.

Manuel was afraid, although he was Captain

of the Delight and had been sailing-master of a yacht, but he had not the least idea of allowing fear to rule him.

He stole softly down the stairs. He meant to reconnoitre, unseen, and then get the foreman's pistol, if it were necessary. As he went down stairs it began to seem to him as if those strange noises must have been a particularly bad dream.

But as he stepped into the kitchen a door slammed, as if it had been shut by the wind. There were eatables on the kitchen table—a broken mince pie, and a pitcher of milk, overturned.

As lightly as he had stepped, those stairs had creaked, Manuel knew. He rushed to the outer door. As he opened it and stepped out his foot was tripped by something—a long chain that had caught tightly between the knob and the great bolt of the door, and been broken; no, so strong a chain would not break, unclasped from something when it was found that it could not be quickly unfastened from the door.

Manuel ran out. The night was dark and starless, and he could see no one. He listened, but his keen ear could detect no sound of footsteps.

Diomeda scolded, the next morning, about "that low-down nigger 'Rastus," who had gone down stairs in the night to eat up her mince pies. It was an old trick of his, she said, to break a pie instead of cutting it, like a nigger dat respected hisself.

Manuel questioned 'Rastus in private. The old fellow grinned broadly, although he shook his head until the great gold hoops in his ears danced. He said for sho' he didn't remember putting the food upon the table. He had gone down to the pantry in the night, he admitted, having a misery in his side which was eased only by mince pie.

There was no reliable information to be obtained from 'Rastus. Manuel suspected that something besides mince pie had been taken to relieve the "misery." But the chain was no dream, and it did not belong to 'Rastus. Manuel planned to get the better even of the wind, so that he need not stay away from the hotel at night—which it was somewhat difficult to do, even for a "smart little Portergee."

But there were no more noises, and he began to be a little ashamed of himself for being so disturbed. So a week or two went by, and in

the meantime a letter lay in the Boston Post Office addressed to "Mr. Manuel Silva, Esq.," and claimed by no one.

It was postmarked at a little town on the edge of the Cape, just where the railroad train begins to slip into the sand banks and the sky dips down into the sea. And what they would read at the Dead Letter Office in Washington, after the clerk had found that there were so many Manuel Silvas in Boston that it was useless for the carriers to try to deliver it, was this:

"Dear Manny—this is to Let you No i am in Grate Truble. that is a Frend of mine is for He is verry laim. i rann awa from scauset if you sa it is Foolishnes you Did 2. there are 2 manny Girls and thay did Nott like a composition i maid about Them. i am afrade you will Bee gon to Kuber Befour i get thare it is an Orfle weighs to boston. but i could get thare if i was alone if i Frose or Starved i would or got Took Up but He is laim. at First i wanted Him to start a Sho but now i Like Him so mutch i cannott leaf Him. thay will shott Him bekos He is laim. so Kome if you can i am in Distres. Respeckfully yours,

"Gustavus Nickerson.

"P. s. He is a bare.

"p. s. i Like Him."

This was the letter that was prevented by cruel fate from reaching the hand for which it was intended. If Manuel had known that his "heart's friend," Gustavus Nickerson, was journeying on foot from Scauset, beset by the perils of winter and rough weather, he would have hastened to his relief whatever might become of the carrying trade.

But he was full of other cares—heavier ones, now—than those of a watchman. The building of the hotel addition had come to a sudden end while it was yet far from finished. One workman remained to take charge of the cargoes of lumber that were still brought from Boston.

It was reported that the landlord had money troubles, but he assured Manuel that the building would begin again soon, and that his bill for carrying lumber would be paid as soon as the work was done.

Diomeda and 'Rastus were gone now, and Manuel and Jo were obliged to take their meals at the one little eating-house on the beach that remained open through the winter.

They had to ask for credit, too, which galled Manuel's spirit sorely. And yet he had faith in his friend the landlord, who had always

paid well and promptly for the "monster" clams.

Manuel had to cheer Jo, who would not be a philosopher and understand what Manny told him, that "business he go up and down, and one must keep the heart stout."

His troubles had driven the thought of burglars from Manuel's mind, and he slept soundly at night, until one night he found himself sitting up in bed, conscious that he had been startled from his sleep by an unusual noise. He listened breathlessly. Some one was trying to open the outer door, which was almost beneath the window of his room. Then the window was tried, the same window that had been opened by the burglars who had left the chain behind them.

Manuel hurried down. The noise had ceased, but when he opened the door a huge shape arose before him in the moonlight. Great paws waved supplicatingly, like those of a begging dog. It was a tame bear.

Manuel had met many bears in his wanderings, and for only a moment was he afraid.

"My friend, was it you that left the chain, and have you come for it?" he asked, jocosely.

But he put his hand on the pistol that the landlord had given him when the others went away. Tame bears did not often wander to people's doors without their keepers.

As he came down on all fours again the bear uttered a little puppyish whine of pain, and Manuel saw that the snow around the door was darkly stained, as if with blood.

A boy's figure came hesitatingly out of the darkness.

"He's so hurt, or I wouldn't have tried to get in," said a boy's voice, with a pathetic break in it. "I had to make him walk to keep us from freezing, and that made the place where he was shot bleed again. If you'll only let us stay somewhere till morning!—he's an orfle good bear, and I'm a friend of Manuel Silva, the Captain of the Delight. You must know him." There was a ring of pride now in the broken, appealing voice. "It's right around here somewhere that he has got a job. I've been asking folks for a week; it seemed as if we never should get here, and I wrote to him and he never answered." A great sob tore its way from Gustavus's throat. He was but small, and he had been brave so long!

Manuel stepped from the shadow of the doorway, and put his arm around Gustavus's neck, while the bear growled with the suspicion of one who has known the unkindness of the world.

If you are a Cape Cod Yankee boy, even a small one, you don't generally like to have another boy kiss you. It makes you feel foolish. But when Manuel's warm Portuguese kisses fell on Gustavus's frost-bitten, tear-stained cheeks, the small boy's heart gave one great bound from despair to joy. They seemed to wipe out all the long foot-sore miles that he had covered since leaving Scauset, all the hunger and cold and perils and troubles of the way.

He had rung the bell for Manny when he returned to Scauset, and brought the fire-engines from far and near, but it was not such a welcome as this! Manny built a roaring fire in the great kitchen stove, and routed out the restaurant proprietor, although it was the dead of the night, and secured such eatables as he had. One should not even hesitate to ask for credit for his heart's friend.

The bear shared the comforts of the kitchen fire and the food with evident appreciation, and Manuel carefully bound up his wound.

"They say he is a fine bear, and I shall be took up for having him," said Gustavus. "But how can I, when I didn't steal him! Some hunters had shot him. I found him in the deep woods."

"He must have run away," said Manny, examining the animal critically. "And how come it that you are in the deep woods?"

Gustavus had not yet shown great freedom in relating his experiences on the road, but Gustavus was very hungry, and was deeply engaged in satisfying his inner boy. Manuel spoke with much sympathy His eyes had even filled with tears as he looked at Gustavus's once chubby cheeks, so thin now that his own mother would scarcely have known him, and at his shoes, so worn that they showed a bit of bulging blue yarn stocking, and even the end of a small toe that must have been frost bitten.

But Gustavus's eyes were cast down, the color arose to his cheeks. "I was running away from being took up," he said, in a muffled voice.

Manuel's eyes widened with surprise and horror. Such a disgrace as to be arrested had never fallen upon a Scauset boy! But of course it was a mistake. His heart's friend could never

have merited such misfortune. Had not he himself known the pangs of undeserved disgrace?

"It was a snowy owl," explained Gustavus, his voice muffled by mortification and mouthfuls, "roosting on a fence. I ran back to a barn where they let me sleep the night before, and borrowed the man's gun. He wasn't there, so I couldn't ask him. And of course you don't stop to think when it's a snowy owl!"

"No one stop to think when it is a snowy owl," assented Manuel, sympathetically. "And the man would have you arrest?" he added, indignantly.

"No, but she did! the woman that owned the owl. He was stuffed! She had put him out on the fence because the moths had stayed in him since summer. I hit him!" Gustavus's dejected face brightened a little. "You'd better believe I hit him—if Ludovico never would let me fire a gun! What he was stuffed with flew away up in the air! But the gun kicked." Gustavus's face fell again. "So the officer she sent for 'most got me! I saw stars all the time I was running away. And I lost my bundle of clothes. There was an orfle pain in my head.

and I was so dizzy in the woods that I couldn't walk. I guess I was there two nights without anything to eat, and I know I should have frozen if it hadn't been for the bear. You'd better believe I was scared when I waked up, early in the morning, and found I was snuggled up to a bear! And then I thought I must have died and gone to Heaven, because, instead of eating me up, he was licking my hand. I didn't believe there could be good bears except in Heaven; and I thought I'd got the better of Viola, for she always said I wouldn't go there. Of course when I got wide-awake and my head felt better, I wasn't so silly. I knew he must be a tame bear that had been in a show. There was one over to Kingstown once, but Viola wouldn't lend me the money to go, because she said that bears were all foolishness; and then she and Emeretta Oakes went, and had ice-cream, too. All the trouble I ever had came by the way of girls."

Gustavus was evidently remembering the composition on girls that had caused him to run away from home. The little switch behind his mother's door seemed a very slight trouble now.

Manuel went out of the room as if struck by a sudden recollection, and came back with a chain which fitted exactly into the hasp on the bear's collar.

"I have heard great shuffling noise that night," he said, as he told Gustavus of the midnight visit. "It was the bear! but not he alone have broken the window and unfasten it to get in and unbolt the door! He belong to some people. They had to take off his chain that night when it caught in the door, and then he ran away from them."

Gustavus turned pale. "I expect they would take him away from me, don't you?" he said, hoarsely.

Manuel lay awake until morning, wondering what he should do with Gustavus and the bear. He thought it strange that they had not written to him from Scauset of Gustavus's disappearance, but Gustavus explained that they probably thought he had run away to sea, as he had often threatened Viola that he would do, and Cap'n 'Siah would not let Caddy or young Josiah write such news, lest Manny should be troubled.

The first thing was to let them know at Scauset that Gustavus was safe, and the next to

try to find the bear's owner, even though it should break Gustavus's heart to part with him, for the bear was evidently accomplished, and a valuable animal.

The workman who had been left in charge of the lumber stopped Manuel as he, with Jo and Gustavus and the bear, was going on board the Delight the next morning.

"You needn't go to Boston any more!" he said. "I've got notice to quit. The landlord has failed, and we've all got to whistle for our pay."

Manuel's heart sank, as even stout hearts will do sometimes.

Little Gustavus was bewildered by this turn of affairs. He thought Manuel would be master of any situation. And now he didn't seem to know what to do any more than any other boy.

And Jo Fretas said, gloomily, that folks that stayed in Scauset and went fishing were the smart ones.

There was a girl waiting at the door when they reached the hotel—a thin, dark-skinned girl, with a can in her hand. Manuel had given her milk one day—for a sick baby. She was

Portuguese, he was sure, but she would not say where she lived. She came running towards them when she caught sight of the bear.

"Osa! osa! it is our bear!" she cried, in great excitement. The bear stood up and begged. The girl jabbered wildly in Portuguese. There were threatenings of officers and jails in her talk. Gustavus had turned pale, although he only understood that she claimed the bear as hers, and the bear evidently recognized the claim.

"But you—you were breaking in when you lost him," Manuel said, in English.

"It was only for the shelter. We were frozen," answered the girl. "And there is often no one at all in the hotels in winter. When we found food we ate, we were so hungry, and the baby was sick. The bear—we depend upon him to get money. The monkey died, and people tire of the tambourine alone. We should starve without the bear."

Manuel's heart was torn between pity for his countrymen's misfortunes and the thought of little Gustavus's wounded affections.

"The bear would not run away from him," he said to the girl, with a nod towards Gustavus,

whose hand was thrust defensively through the bear's collar.

"There was so little to eat and a bear has so great an appetite!" said the girl, mournfully. "And they had to beat him to make him do his tricks. It is not in the heart even of a bear to amuse when he is hungry."

"Where do you stay now?" asked Manuel.

The girl pointed hesitatingly to a large hotel farther up the beach.

"You will not tell? We do no harm," she said, anxiously.

"The Myles House? I have seen no one there this winter," said Manuel, wonderingly.

"We do not go out in the daytime. But there must be milk for the baby." said the girl. "There is wood, and we keep warm, but we are hungry."

Manuel slipped the chain into the bear's collar when they reached the house, and led the way with him, firmly, toward the Myles House.

"It is their bear, and the right—we must do him. But we will not let them illtreat him! Perhaps, now he is lame, they will not want him."

Jo Fretas followed to the hotel. The tramps were his countrymen also. But he said he didn't like to see Portuguese wandering round with a bear; they should always be sailors. He had much more respect for this man when he found him sunburned, tattoed, and ear-ringed—evidently at some time a mariner.

They were overjoyed at the restoration of the bear. The big boy, Emilio, heavy-browed and dark as a mulatto, hugged him, and Anita, the girl, enticed him to dance a little with her tambourine.

Manuel and Jo Fretas went over to see them again in the evening. In spite of his own troubles, Manuel's heart was heavy for them. They were his own countrymen. Jo wished to advise the man and boy more strongly than ever to go to sea. Gustavus followed after, choking down his sobs, although he had said he would not go. He wished to take leave of the bear, for to-morrow he was to sail away with Manuel in the Delight somewhere to find "a job."

Jo carried his fiddle, and played, and Anita accompanied him on her tambourine, and the bear danced—reluctantly. And he tried to fol-

low Gustavus when they went away—Gustavus, who dared not look back, but ran all the way home with a bursting heart, and was a little bitter against Manuel, who was evidently not so great and powerful as he had seemed in Scauset, and who had left even what little jingle there was in his pocket with those wicked, thieving people.

For it was true that Manuel would to-morrow face the world penniless, in debt even, with only the Delight and his own stout heart to help him.

But it had been enough before; it would be again. So thought Manuel as he closed his eyes to sleep, with a thought of the little house on the Point, which the good God would surely help him to guard.

It was not long past midnight when a great cry of fire awakened him. His room was light, the whole sky seemed ablaze. It was the Myles House, the great hotel where they had spent the evening before.

The hotel was burned to the ground; there was from the first no hope of saving it. Manuel was anxious for the safety of the Portuguese tramps, but daylight showed a note pushed

under the door of Manuel's hotel—a hasty scrawl in Portuguese:

"We have taken the advice of the good Joseph Fretas, and have gone to sea."

Gone to sea! How could they go? There was not a vessel at the Putasket wharves except the Delight. Manuel looked wonderingly toward the shore. The Delight was gone!

The color surged over Jo Fretas's dark face.

"Portuguese—and thief!" he murmured, as if such a conjunction was never heard of before.

"Of course they stole the bear too—the bear that you made me give back to them!" whimpered Gustavus. "When I've had such orfle hard luck too! The tunny getting away, and the snowy owl being stuffed; but I could have had a show with the bear alone!"

He looked angrily at Manny. He said in his heart that he shouldn't wonder if Cap'n Seba Oakes, of Scauset, who didn't like "Portergees," was a wise man.

"You don't suppose they set the hotel on fire?" Jo Fretas was saying huskily to Manuel.

"No; I heard a man say there was a lantern tipped over. They went in haste, not long after

we left them," answered Manny, straining his eyes over the wide expanse of water. There had been a wind all night, a fair wind for the open sea. The Delight, by this time, was probably far away—the stanch little vessel that was his all!

Two men were coming hastily toward the hotel, one in the dress of an officer. The color came and went in Gustavus's face.

"The other man looks just like the snowy owl woman's husband!" he murmured, in terror. And he retired hastily—alas! that it must be told of Gustavus—into a great barrel that stood near the door.

But it was upon the shoulders of Manuel and Jo Fretas that the officer laid his hand.

"I have a warrant for the arrest of both of you on the charge of setting fire to the Myles House," he said. When both Manuel and Jo uttered a startled denial, he added sharply that they were both known to have been there the night before. Meanwhile little Gustavus, in the barrel, felt his bosom torn by conflicting emotions. His pride in Manuel was gone. The "smart," the lucky "little Portergee," had lost his greatness. He had also lost the Delight,

which had made all the Scauset boys envy him. And he hadn't treated him very well about the bear, either, thought little Gustavus.

But suddenly his heart thrilled with the old affection. Manuel was his friend, who, ever since the whale show on Striped Marsh Beach, had tried to include him, a small boy, in all the big-boy good times. Was that a thing to forget?

He was Manny, anyway; there was nobody like him!

Out of the barrel arose Gustavus, manfully—a small, tattered, weather-worn figure. "I ain't goin' back on you, Manny, because you're in trouble," he said, firmly, in his shrill, high-keyed voice. "We'll stick together!—Scauset fellers in about the same fix."

CHAPTER VIII

THE DERELICT DELIGHT

"It is a hard time, but we fight him through." That was what Manny said.

A hard time indeed; for he would get no pay for the carrying of lumber in the Delight, which he had thought so good a job that he had promised Caddy that there should be a new front door and a piazza to the old house at the Point the next summer.

Gustavus Nickerson had reckoned up sadly how far front door and piazza money would go toward getting up a show; but Gustavus thought it was always a mistake to listen to girls.

There was no prospect that Caddy would get her heart's desire now. And Gustavus Nickerson's show, which was his heart's desire, seemed never farther off, for the tame bear which he had found in the woods had been carried off by the Portuguese wanderers on board the Delight.

It was Jo Fretas, the mate of the Delight, who seemed most angry with his rascally countrymen, because of the sarcastic little note, in which they explained that they had taken Jo Fretas's advice and gone to sea. Jo Fretas shook his strong brown fist toward the sea.

"Dogs of Portuguese! to the ends of the the earth will I chase them!" he cried, his dark face aflame. And then Gustavus left Manuel's side and went over to Jo Fretas. That seemed to Gustavus the proper spirit. And if they chased those people they might possibly get the bear. It didn't seem at all probable to Gustavus's mind that so affectionate and accomplished a bear could rightfully belong to such people as they.

But it is difficult to chase people to the ends of the earth, however valiant one may feel, with an officer's hand on one's shoulder.

Since they couldn't pursue the robbers, who were perhaps by this time far out at sea, Gustavus felt that the next best thing was to get himself arrested. Where should he go, if not with Manuel and Jo? Moreover, it hurt one's dignity not to be old enough or of sufficient consequence to be arrested.

But by this time it was beginning to be proved that the little Portergee was not without friends at Putasket Beach. There were few winter residents, but they all came speedily to the rescue. And from the village near by, where they had made Manuel's acquaintance in the "monster clam-bake's" time, an indignant crowd arrived as soon as the news of his arrest had time to spread about.

Who could be so stupid as to associate the "smart little Portergee" with those tramping tambourine-players? they demanded. Was it not enough that they had stolen his vessel?

Moreover, was it not evident that the tramps had not meant to set the fire, but had accidentally overturned a lantern in their hasty flight—hasty, because there was a fair wind for the Delight.

So the upshot of that matter was that Manuel and Jo were not only released, but telegrams were sent by the Selectmen of the town to all towns along the coast, warning the authorities to take possession of a stolen vessel, the Delight, owned by Captain Manuel Silva, if she appeared in any of their ports.

That seemed a hopeful measure, but Manuel

shook his head over it. There was half a barrel of "hardtack" on board the Delight; while that lasted she would not appear in any port. Jo Fretas was in favor of hiring a steam-tug and going in pursuit of her, but that would be very expensive, and was a scarcely feasible plan without a penny in their pockets.

They did manage to telegraph to Link Freeman, at Kingstown, for his porgy-boat—Link was a friend, and would wait for his pay—only to find that the porgy-boat was laid up for repairs.

And now so much time had been lost by the arrest, and the wind, which blows, as the sun shines, alike for the evil and the good, had been so fair to carry the Delight far, far away, that pursuit seemed almost hopeless.

There came a little rift in the cloud of misfortune just then, as there often does when it is at its very biggest and blackest. The landlord secured an agreement of his creditors by which the lumber which had been carried to the beach was given to the workmen in payment of their claims, and Manuel had his share—a large share; the workmen insisted that it should be so, in sympathy for his loss.

But this is such a contrary world! Sometimes it seems as if nothing would go right; one almost believes, with Jo Fretas, that people would better stay at home and go fishing. There was such a glut in the market that lumber would sell for almost nothing. Jo Fretas said that was probably why the creditors agreed so readily to the "preferred claim."

Jo could whistle gayly for a breeze in a calm, or fiddle fearlessly when waves were rough, but in misfortunes that left you without a vessel's planks under your feet he lost heart entirely.

Besides, those tramps had played a trick. Jo admitted that he wasn't the kind of fellow that could ever stand it to have a trick played on him.

Manuel sold a little of the lumber for a small price, and paid his debt to the restaurant man; and then there came some news in a letter from home that caused him to put on his thinking-cap. "You're a dear boy to think about the new front door and the piazza," wrote Caddy; "and it will be especially nice to have it this summer, because—only think of it!—there are going to be two new houses built in Scauset. Some summer people who were here last season

are going to build one over on Striped Marsh Beach, and Cyrus Dence, the schoolmaster, is going to build the other."

Both Jo and Gustavus pricked up their ears when Manuel read that aloud, as they walked from the post-office together. "He is my friend. I am glad that he will live in Scauset," said Manuel. And it was only friendship that thrilled his heart at first; the business idea came later.

"'He is going to be married,'" he read on, "'to a Scauset girl.'"

"Goin' to marry a girl! He must be smart!" murmured little Gustavus with scorn.

"'And you never would guess who it is,'" continued Caddy's letter. "'There was so much anxiety about little Gustavus that the engagement wasn't told of until lately—not until they heard that he was safe. But we could all see which way the cat jumped, he was so eager to console her when she felt so bad about not owning up about the arithmetic and driving you away.'"

Little Gustavus stood stock-still in the road and stared; it seemed as if even his freckles stood out with amazement.

"Her?" he gasped, unbelievingly.

"'It is Viola Nickerson,'" read Manuel, and he bobbed his head with emphatic satisfaction. "It is I who tell him first that one must be kind to a girl! If I tell of her as he want me to—" Manny heaved a long sigh; he had seen hard times since that winter day when he had left Scauset in disgrace. "I am glad always that I did not tell, and more so now!"

"He can't never bring her back, can he?" said little Gustavus, with rising spirits. "I guess mebbe I'll go home after the weddin'."

"It is a fine beach, the Striped Marsh Beach," said Manuel, meditatively. "So broad, so long as this, that have so many great hotels and handsome cottages! I carry down my lumber to build the new houses and many more! I get more—the lumber is so cheap. If I had but the Delight!"

And then Manuel darted away from his companions, and they saw him going, like an arrow shot from a bow, towards the landing.

"Something strike him here," said Jo, touching his forehead and shrugging his shoulders. "As for me, I take life easier," and he went and got his violin and played, sitting upon the

hotel porch; for it was a very balmy day for March, and little Gustavus felt a homesick longing for the Marsh that would soon now be growing striped with its rosemary and its reeds.

"Manny will fix things," he said, confidently, as he sat upon the step and clasped his small, patched knee—Manuel had patched it! "Yes, sir, he will." For all Gustavus's faith had returned, and life had brightened for him since his sister Viola was to be married—Viola, who thought that faces should be continually washed, and holes never made in stockings or jackets, and wanted a boy to know grammar and manners like a girl! And it was all owing to Manuel that she was going to be married—no one else could have brought about such good fortune!

If only Cyrus Dence did not repent and bring her back! he thought, anxiously, for you expect misfortune after you have seen the world as it shows itself to a penniless boy on a winter tramp from almost the tip end of the Cape to within a few miles of Boston.

Manuel was coming up from the landing. He tossed his cap into air as he caught his friends' eyes. That was not quite like Manuel,

who was a self-contained little Portergee, but when your heart has been away down, fairly into your boots, as the saying is, why it comes up with such a rebound—when it gets a chance—that it is apt to make you a little beside yourself.

"It was—Jack Dolliver!" he gasped, as soon as he came within hearing. "I say to myself that never was a so red head and not Jack Dolliver's! And if one do well and despair not, good chance he come at last. Jack's vessel, the Abby Ann, she lie here empty. He come up with cargo of salt mackerel; he keep him so long for a market; and he put in here to pay the restaurant man; since last summer he owe him. He put in here empty, and though the Abby Ann is old and smell of much fish, she is great, she hold much lumber! Jack will carry the lumber and us all—home." Manny's voice broke suddenly—home, but without the Delight!

"It is great good fortune. I sell the lumber there," he went on, firmly. "There is fine beach; it is fine summer place! We will give to Scauset bome." Manuel meant boom, but double o came hard, always.

Jo's fiddle stopped in the middle of "Then You'll Remember Me," and Gustavus's freckles stood out again. They both felt great respect for such manly aims, but Jo asked him if he wasn't putting on frills, and Gustavus said, firmly, that for his part he preferred the show business to any other.

But, nevertheless, they worked with a will, loading the Abby Ann with Manuel's lumber, even Gustavus, although his small muscles ached, even as they had ached on the tramp. And on a fine morning, with a lively breeze, off went the Abby Ann with a good cargo of lumber and three Scauset boys, who, at that time at least, heartily believed that "east, west, hame's best!"

Now Scauset is a little less than fifty miles from Boston, as the crow flies, or as a ship with a fair wind sails, and yet many things may happen on the way. The lively breeze with which the Abby Ann had set out still continued, but the wind had shifted, and she had to beat and make long tacks, and homesick hearts grew impatient, and Manuel began to fear that the lumber for the two new houses would be bought before his load arrived. It

even seemed possible that the houses might be built, the Abby Ann was such an unwieldy old hulk, especially when one was used to the trim little Delight, that obeyed the helm as an intelligent horse obeys the rein, and seemed to know how to take advantage of the winds herself, instead of wallowing around as if she didn't know what to do, like the poor old Abby Ann.

They were so far off shore that they seemed likely to be driven across the Atlantic, when they fell in with Nick Briggs, who had been on a deep sea fishing trip.

Nick was a Scauset boy, and he greeted the wanderers heartily.

"Hullo, Manny! I knew you'd got home. Did you get her off all right?" he shouted, which seemed a little surprising, as they were nearly twenty miles from Scauset, and it was many weeks since Manuel had been any nearer.

"Get who off?" shouted Manny.

"The Delight—off Horseshoe Ledge."

"You get yourself out! That was a year ago!" answered Manuel. For Nick was always one who would have his joke.

"No, no! day before yesterday! Wasn't it

you? I know it was the Delight. There were two or three on board," cried Nick.

The distance widened between his little fishing-boat and the clumsy old Abby Ann, and his voice was lost to her crew.

"We'll make Horseshoe Island, anyhow, if we don't get to Scauset till the middle of next week!" said Jack Dolliver. But when they came near enough to see, there was no vessel anywhere near Horseshoe Ledge. Indeed, pilots gave it a wide berth, and it was only in a thick fog that the Delight had got caught there the summer before.

"If that was one of Nick Briggs's jokes, it was a heartless one," thought Jack Dolliver, seeing the light fade from Manuel's eager face.

"Some folks are easily fooled," grumbled old Job Freeman, the mate of the Abby Ann, who thought it was about hard enough to get to Scauset without "pollywoggin' all 'round the lot."

They were forced to make another long tack. All around them were vessels that they knew, like familiar faces. Before them in the distance Manuel had caught sight of one that looked strangely familiar.

It was a long way off; it was only a little dark patch upon the horizon, but any sailor will tell you that he knows the trim of his own ship as you know the gait of a friend.

"Look, the Delight!" cried Manuel, and sparks glowed in his sallow cheeks. The others didn't feel sure, but they gave chase with all the speed that the poor old heavily-laden Abby Ann was equal to.

It would have been a hopeless chase if the lighter vessel had been skillfully steered. But old Job Freeman, surveying her through a glass, as they came nearer to her, shook his head seriously: "She's carrying too much canvas, and it 'pears to me as if the wind was drivin' of her. Either there's a drunken man at the helum or she's a derelict." A derelict is an abandoned vessel, afloat at the mercy of tide and wind.

"They run her aground most likely, if it is the Delight," said Jo Fretas, looking through the glass in his turn. "I knew that fellow was no sailor, with all his tattooing! And then they rode off in the tender and left her! Easy enough to row to Fleetwell from Horseshoe Ledge."

"But there's somebody aboard of her!" ex-

claimed Manuel, when his sharp eyes had their turn at the glass. "But he is not sailor—or else she is herself disabled."

The Delight, if it were she, was now pitching in the trough of the sea, the waves were heavy, and the wind fitful; she made but little progress, and the Abby Ann approached her steadily.

"It's a wonder she hasn't gone under before this time, carrying full sail like that," said Jack Dolliver.

"She's so trim and so stanch, she upset no more than a bird!" said Manuel, proudly. "Oh, if I come but once again to her deck!"

"You'd better find out who's there before you try to get aboard of her," said Jo Fretas. "It looks to me as if 'twas the bear. They're just about mean enough to go off and leave him, if they thought he never could dance again. When you do come across mean Portuguese—!" Jo's expressive head-shake amply finished the sentence.

Little Gustavus actually trembled as he peered through the glass.

"If—if it's my bear he'll know me," he said, after the manner of the old woman who had a

little dog at home. "When he hears my voice he'll stand upon his hind legs and beg."

And Gustavus whistled and called sharply, cheeringly, across the roaring waves. But the figure on the deck, now plainly visible with the naked eye, grew no taller, although it moved about.

"The mischief of it is," said Jo Fretas, wisely wagging his head, "that you hadn't better try to board that vessel with Cap'n Bruin in command! He's scared to death, and a bear hates the water. When they bring 'em over lots of 'em die on the way, and the best of 'em get so ugly you daren't go nigh 'em. You'll find the tame is all out of him, but the bear is all there!"

"Lower the boat and I risk me!" cried Manuel, who certainly did not mean to risk losing the Delight for fear of a bear.

"We'd better go with you, Jo and I," said Jack Dolliver. "I've got a pistol, and if Captain Bruin shows fight, we'll put a bullet into him."

"No! no!" screamed Gustavus. "He's my bear; Manny knows he is! I won't have him killed!"

"Pooh! he will never perform again; his skin is the best of him," said Jo Fretas.

"But I like him! I tell you, I like him!" cried little Gustavus. "When fellers have such hard times together as him and me did—"

The boat was lowered by this time. Jack Dolliver said something about youngsters being in the way, but Gustavus went in the boat, nevertheless. It was his bear, Manuel said, now that the tramps had abandoned it, and he hoped that the bear, however frightened he might be, would know him.

"He will like me, you will see!" said Gustavus, confidently. And that dreadful Jo Fretas said he supposed that small boy was tender.

The little row-boat had a hard time in a choppy sea, and the wind was playing such pranks with the Delight that it was dangerous business to get alongside her.

A dreadful cry came constantly to their ears; it seemed partly to be the cry of a human creature in terror, and partly the ferocious snarl of some wild beast.

"I told you the bear would be all back in him," said Jo. And Jack Dolliver kept putting his hand on his pistol, even while they were

maneuvering to get the row-boat into such a position that it would be possible to climb on board the Delight.

The bear looked down at them from the Delight's stern. The cry was all savage now, and he seemed ready to spring upon the first who came near. Little Gustavus stood up in the boat.

"Bub! Bub, old fellow! poor old fellow!" he said, chokingly.

The change that came over the savage creature was something wonderful to see. Slowly the huge bulk raised itself; the great paws were waved supplicatingly; the voice was an appealing whine.

"Anyhow, you'd better let Gustavus go alone first," said Jo Fretas, who boasted much acquaintance with bears.

But Manuel went, too, and found the savage wild beast quite gone, and only the poor, old tame bear alone on the abandoned vessel, and feebly essaying a few steps, in spite of his lameness, when Gustavus hugged him.

Jack Dolliver went back alone to the Abby Ann, and Manuel, the happiest boy in the round world, unless it were little Gustavus, once more

took command of his precious Delight, succeeding Captain Bruin, who was evidently more than glad to resign.

Jo remained on board the Delight; he felt it to be his duty as mate, whatever might be his distrust of the bear; and the Delight, which had been only a little grazed this time by the rocks of Horseshoe Ledge, speedily left the Abby Ann far behind her on the way to Scauset.

"Cowards of Portuguese!" said Jo, scornfully. "They might have known she would float off with the tide."

"But they feared the arrest," said Manuel. "And there is always the Lord to watch." Manny never doubted that the good God had given back his Delight.

Home to Scauset!—but on the way Gustavus Nickerson had a fright which he will remember as long as he lives.

He gave the bear a good rubbing down to make him feel better, and in doing so he took off his collar. On the under side of the collar was this inscription, written in red ink; "This bear is the great Mézul. He has appeared before all the crowned heads of Europe, and won

over fifty medals and decorations. He is worth five thousand dollars."

Little Gustavus's heart beat to suffocation; he felt it thumping in his ears. Worth five thousand dollars! Never should he, little Gustavus Nickerson, be permitted to have and to hold anything worth five thousand dollars! The bear would be taken away from him; he would be sold!

He beckoned to Manuel privately. Manny could always "fix things."

His eyes opened very wide at the red-ink writing. "And he is your bear! They can never claim him again, those wicked people," he said. "The great Mézul!"

"But I want him to be just Bub!" wailed little Gustavus. "At home they will want to sell him! Viola will. She will want a piano and lace curtains instead of him."

"But Viola, she will be married," said Manuel, cheeringly.

Gustavus shook his head doubtfully. "We gave away our dog, Dandy, but the people brought him back because he chewed up things. You can never tell," he said.

"Then I tell you what you do," cried Manuel,

gayly; "you throw the collar overboard—like this." He gave Gustavus's hand a little jerk, and over went the collar into the deep sea. "Now he is only Bub, and no one knows he was the great Mézul, worth five thousand dollar—but you and me. When we have great show, or the bome come to Scauset and we are rich, then maybe we tell."

CHAPTER IX

THE WAKING UP OF SCAUSET

It was Grandsir Fretas who first caught sight of the Delight as she made her way into Scauset Harbor. Grandpa was sitting on the queer little second-story balcony that he had built upon his house. He pretended that he was looking for the smokestack of a Cunarder, which could sometimes be espied on a clear day, but Grandma knew that he was looking for the Delight.

He was proud of his young countryman, Manuel Silva, and liked to hear him called "the smart little Portergee." He had sympathized, too, in the troubles that had sent Manuel away from Scauset. Manny had carried himself bravely at home, but while they played checkers together, Grandpa Fretas had found out about the troubles. Jo Fretas, too, was probably on board the Delight, and Jo's

merry heart and his fiddle had been missed in Scauset.

"She's coming!" shouted Grandsir Fretas, and put on his tall hat which he had worn scarcely at all that winter, and hurried off to tell the news.

Grandma Fretas, all in a flurry, donned her best cap, and hurried over to the little house at the Point to help Caddy to "cook up." When the Scauset boats came in, good appetites were very apt to come with them. And it was generally suspected that Manuel Silva, Jo Fretas, and little Gustavus Nickerson had been having hard times. Gustavus's mother had heard that he had tramped all the way to Boston, and she had cried about it, and had burned, in the kitchen stove, the switch that had hung behind the door.

And Gustavus's sister Viola had actually said, with penitent tears, that she "didn't care! some of that composition was true."

Caddy Doane fell to whisking eggs, to make the pudding that Manuel particularly liked, just as soon as Grandma Fretas told her the news. Caddy was very apt to show the boys in practical ways how glad she was to see

them. But when she tied an apron around little Israel's neck and tried to make him help, little Israel ran away to the wharf, with the long apron tripping him up.

A pretty time it was to set a fellow to making puddings, thought little Israel, when the Delight was almost ready to cast anchor, and every man and boy in Scauset who could possibly leave his work was at the wharf.

Lucky that it was Saturday and there was no school; it would have been pretty hard for the teachers to keep order after it was known that the Delight was coming into port.

Cap'n Seba Oakes had come stumping down to the wharf on his wooden leg.

"That ain't the Delight! What be you thinkin' of? It's the Abby Ann, and she's loaded heavy. She went up to Boston with fish; what in nater is she a-bringin' home?"

The Abby Ann was, indeed, nearer to the wharf than the Delight; but her trips to Boston and return were a very common occurrence, and in the excitement of seeing the Delight no one had observed that she was heavily laden —no one but Cap'n Seba Oakes, who acknowledged frankly that he "thought more of native-

born Scauset boys and their vessels than he did of that little Portergee."

Cap'n 'Siah Doane was on the wharf, and he pointed an eager trembling forefinger towards the Delight, just then rounding the Point.

"She's empty enough, anyhow! I expect that little Portergee has got clean out o' pocket, and is comin' home to be took care of," piped Cap'n Seba, shrilly.

"He'd be Manny still, if he had, and he'd be comin' to own folks," said Cap'n 'Siah, in his quavering old voice.

As soon as the Abby Ann dropped anchor her Captain was greeted with a chorus of jocular comments and questions. Had he mistaken Scauset for New York? Was he expecting to build a hotel or only a block of stores?

"Lumber consigned to Manuel Silva, Esq. Another load to come. His business what he's going to do with it," answered the Captain, shortly.

Cap'n 'Siah's anxious wrinkles smoothed themselves into a broad smile as he turned towards Cap'n Seba Oakes.

"'Pears to have lit on his feet ag'in!" he said, proudly.

"What in nater is the foolhardy little Portergee goin' to do with all that lumber, and why didn't he fetch some of it in his own vessel?" cried Cap'n Seba. "And what kind of a new figger-head has he got to the Delight?"

For there was a very queer, tall figure to be seen on the Delight's bow as she came steadily to shore. The bear that had been deserted by the cruel Portuguese on the Delight, when the vessel upon which they had run away had got aground upon Horseshoe Ledge, was still very lame, but he could stand upon his hind legs and shoulder arms, and Gustavus Nickerson had felt that this would produce a fine effect as the Delight came into port.

People would not know what a wonderful bear he was. For a moment Gustavus almost regretted that the certificate that the bear was the great Mézul, the performing bear that had delighted all the crowned heads of Europe, had been dropped into the sea. It had been the only safe course, since the certificate had set forth that the bear was worth five thousand dollars, and Gustavus had felt sure that he would be taken away from him and sold, his people were so poor.

"You must work for them like a man, since you will not sell the bear!" That was what Manuel had said. And when Gustavus had owned his fear that he should boast to "the fellers" that the bear was worth five thousand dollars Manuel had said earnestly, "Your mind you must strengthen him, and never tell what you make him up not to!"

"A bear! a bear!" shouted the possessors of younger eyes than Cap'n Seba Oakes's, and many small hearts were wrung with envy of Gustavus Nickerson, who had run away from home, and returned triumphantly, in the Delight, with a bear.

But it may be set down here, that thereafter there was in Scauset no such discourager of running away as Gustavus Nickerson. He candidly expressed the opinion that any boy who did it was a fool.

The crowd on the wharf cheered for the little Portergee and then for little Gustavus, which made him hang his head and remember, with shame, that he had run away, then it cheered impartially for Jo Fretas and his fiddle, and—a little faintly, and chiefly in boys' voices—for the bear.

Scauset was, in fact, wholly unacquainted with bears, and cherished a not unnatural prejudice against them. Cap'n 'Siah's pride had given way suddenly to anxiety.

"You ain't expectin' to find a market here to Scauset for the lumber, be you, Manny?" he asked, nervously wiping the wen on the top of his head. "They've been talkin' for 'most twenty years about buildin' a town-hall and a new church, but 'tain't likely they'll get at it in a hurry."

Manuel smiled reassuringly into the kindly, anxious old face, although, in truth, doubt weighed heavily upon his own heart; it was so difficult to get Scauset to do anything in a hurry.

"Lumber is cheap. I will make boom—building boom!" he said, stoutly.

"A buildin' boom?" repeated Cap'n 'Siah, slowly. "Why, Manny, a hurricane is more likely to strike Scauset than that! You hain't been and bought all that lumber, calc'latin' on a buildin' boom strikin' Scauset! Well, I declare, Manny, you hain't got over bein' a resky little Portergee!"

Asher Baker came hurriedly down the pier.

He was the man with whom Manuel had once had a little difficulty about the Striped Marsh show. He lived near Striped Marsh, and was the Nickersons' nearest neighbor. "Calc'latin' to sell reasonable, Manuel?" he demanded, and all the muscles of his face twitched. He had a nervous disease, the result of making many inventions—none of which had ever succeeded. "I'm expectin' to need some lumber myself, in the course of a year or two!"

"It'll be right here time you need it, Asher," said Cap'n Seba Oakes. And the crowd laughed a little—as a crowd will laugh at a small joke—even though it was proud of its "little Portergee." Manuel only smiled until he showed all his strong, white teeth, although the red flamed in his tawny cheeks. Cyrus Dence, the schoolmaster, laid his hand on Manny's shoulder just then; he got a real Portuguese hug—and he returned it. They had understood each other, those two, ever since a little affair concerning Viola Nickerson and a key to the arithmetic.

"I am going to build a little house over on the Striped Marsh road, and I want to engage you to furnish the lumber!" said the schoolmaster in so loud a voice that every one heard.

And he did not look in the least sheepish, as little Gustavus thought he ought to, since it was because he was going to marry his sister Viola that he needed to build a little house. Viola was certainly very agreeable to-day. She had kissed little Gustavus and cried over him. But she did not yet know that he was the owner of the bear.

Manuel walked homeward with Cap'n 'Siah and Grandsir Fretas and Jo, while young Josiah and little Israel, who was still embarrassed by the apron, divided their attention between Manuel and the bear.

So great a crowd followed the bear that, until they turned into the Striped Marsh road, Viola had not observed that it was Gustavus who was leading him. Then she uttered a little scream; it wasn't what Viola could do in the way of a scream if she tried, but it made people run to see what was the matter.

"Oh, Gustavus, let the dreadful creature go–o–o! Won't somebody shoot him?" she cried.

Gustavus placed himself before the bear, and his face grew so white that the freckles stood out big and yellow.

"Anybody that shoots him will have to shoot me first!" he said, firmly.

"Then let him run away into the woods; oh, do, sonny, that's a good boy!" wailed Viola.

"Let him run away!" echoed Gustavus, and his freckles were swallowed up now in a wrathful redness. "He's the great Mé— He's worth—"

"You shut yourself up!" shouted Manuel, and people stared at him in amazement, for his Portuguese politeness very seldom forsook him.

Gustavus had turned pale again, and he swallowed a great lump in his throat. He had almost revealed the great secret, as he would not have done for worlds! That was what a provoking girl, like Viola, could make a fellow do!

"He's my bear—mine and Manuel's," he said, stoutly, as he recovered his presence of mind.

"Then you let Manuel take him!" cried Viola, sharply. "He may be equal to a bear, but you're not!"

Now, could a girl say a meaner thing than that? And the crowd cheered! It seemed to be applauding the compliment to Manuel, and

not thinking much about Gustavus Nickerson's feelings, anyway!

"I should like to know where you thought you were going to keep him?" continued Viola, evidently encouraged by the applause of the crowd.

And even in that moment of excitement Gustavus resolved to be firm with Cyrus Dence; he would have Manuel (who understood business) draw up a paper and make Cyrus Dence sign it, agreeing that he would never bring Viola back after he had married her!

Viola's question was the more irritating because he did not himself know where he was going to keep the bear, and was very anxious about the matter.

"I should think anybody must be stupid not to know that I'm going to keep him in our woo—wood-shed!" he shouted, with an angry stammer.

Viola uttered another little scream, and all the girls in the crowd echoed it.

Manuel wiped his head anxiously. It was plain that Scauset was not going to know how to adapt itself to a bear. There were no cellars in the town, the sandy soil making them almost

an impossibility, and people generally kept their vegetables in their wood-sheds; they probably could not be induced to think that even a civilized bear could be trusted in such a place.

"With a Spanish vessel lurkin' outside and a dangerous wild beast let loose in the town, Scauset 'pears to be kind of a resky place to stay in," piped Cap'n Seba Oakes, in his high-keyed voice.

A Spanish vessel outside! Manuel pricked up his ears, and so did Jo Fretas—Jo, who longed to carry his light heart and his fiddle to the war with Spain.

There was a little good-natured jeering about the Spanish vessel. There had been a rumor that one had been seen off Kingstown Harbor, but no one in Scauset had seen it, and Cap'n Seba was generally considered an "alarmist."

"I only hope there ain't any Spanish spies or sympathizers round here! There ain't no question about Portergees born on the Cape, but when they come from nobody knows where—"

There was a wild hurrahing for the "little Portergee"—all the boys in Scauset had accompanied Manuel and the bear towards the Point and the Striped Marsh—and the wrath that

had blazed in Manuel's face died away in a laugh.

Cap'n Seba found it convenient to go stumping home across lots. He had often made the boys angry, but they had never before been reenforced by a bear.

Cap'n 'Siah laid his hand on Manuel's shoulder; it was almost a grasp. With Cap'n Seba's words had come the sudden fear—an awful tug at his heart—that Manuel might wish to go and fight for Spain. It was Southern, not Yankee, blood that was warm at his heart and glowed in his dusky face.

Gustavus Nickerson was pulling at Manuel on the other side.

"I don't know nothin' what I'm goin' to do with him! Anybody can boss that hollers like Viola," he said, dejectedly.

"We have a wood-shed chamber, and Caddy she never scream," said Manuel, reflectively. And then he spoke a few persuasive words, in a low tone, to Cap'n 'Siah.

"Why—why, Manny, I don't want to say nothin' against your fetchin' home anything you want to, but it does appear as if a bear would be kind of extry to our house. Their

ways would seem to be kind of different from anything we're accustomed to," said Cap'n 'Siah, mildly. "And seein' that Caddy keeps her preserves in the wood-shed chamber—"

"I give word of honor for him! I know he is a bear of heart and mind," said Manuel, earnestly. For Manuel had observed the affection that the great Mézul showed for little Gustavus.

Meanwhile Scauset was beginning to talk about lumber and building. Uncle Saul Nickerson had come over from Tooraloo, and ordered lumber of Manuel to build a new barn and a back-yard fence.

Now Scauset was not going to be outdone by Tooraloo! Abner Atwood said he had been calculating for five or six years to build a barn that was big enough to hold all his marsh hay, and he guessed now was his time. And fences! Everybody discovered, suddenly, that you couldn't "keep your door-yard slick" without one.

Then Phineas Doane and Lizy Freeman, who had been keeping company for ten years, decided to marry and build a house, because lumber was so cheap! And, after that, if the Selectmen

didn't call a meeting to consider the long-delayed matter of building a town-hall!

Manuel wrote to the lumber dealers, from whom he had carried supplies to the Putasket House all winter, and the reply assured him that he could have lumber at low prices and with long credit. Nobody who had any dealings with Manuel was afraid to trust him, and a reputation like that is as good as money—to say nothing of its being far, far better!

The Abby Ann was going to Boston for another load of lumber, and the Delight, also, to bring all the freight she could. Jo Fretas was going as mate. But on the very morning when the two vessels were to sail a queer thing happened—one of the comparatively small things that often interfere with great undertakings.

Manuel arose at four o'clock—there was a fair wind, and they were to get off as soon as possible—and went into the wood-shed chamber to see the bear, and, lo and behold! there was no bear, and there were no preserves!

Caddy's mosquito-netting had been torn from the window, and one blind that had been fastened was partly torn from its hinges.

"He never did it alone!" said Gustavus Nick-

erson firmly, when Manuel's persistent whistling had brought him across the field. "Somebody stole him and the preserves! We ought to have had a guard for him!" Gustavus was white, and his legs shook under him. "It's awful times anyhow. They've caught a Spanish spy over to Kingstown!"

"Come," beckoned Manuel. The sandy road had been moistened by a shower in the night, and in it Manuel had suddenly discovered tracks. "It is towards the woods that he have gone!"

Gustavus thought they would better go in search of the sheriff. His courage was equal to a bear, but not to a Spanish spy.

But Manuel led him on. He had found a stone of the wall that bordered the road covered with splinters of glass, and little trickles of red jelly. He began to think that Gustavus underrated the abilities of the great Mézul. There was a trail of the shattered glass and jelly across the field to the woods.

Gustavus prudently lagged behind until Manuel's shout led him to the great hollow pine-tree that had been struck by lightning years before. Manuel had followed the trail of broken glass to the tree, and had found the

great hollow filled with Caddy's jars and tumblers of sweetmeats, carefully packed away, only a few of them having been broken.

"I think he have done it every bit himself," said Manuel, whose opinion of the bear's abilities had increased with each day of acquaintance. "He knock one glass down, and find that it is sweet; then he plan to hide all. We must get a wheelbarrow and carry the preserves home before Caddy is up. Then will we look for the bear."

To Gustavus's mind this was a reversal of the proper order of things, but he submitted, and the preserves were soon on their way home in the wheelbarrow.

As they reached the house, Cap'n Seba Oakes came stumping along the road.

"Heard the news?" he cried shrilly. "The store's been broken into! All the canned things and sweet stuff stolen, a blind broke off, and a window smashed in! I expect nothin' but what there's another Spanish spy round! What in nater have you got in that wheelbarrer, you little Portergee? I thought you was goin' to Boston this mornin'?"

Gustavus interposed his stout little person

between Cap'n Seba and the wheelbarrow, which Manuel had before taken the precaution to cover with his jacket.

"Land sake! There's that bear comin' across the field," continued Cap'n Seba, in some excitement. The bear was coming slowly from the woods. His leg was bleeding, and he stopped often and held it up, as if he were in pain. "You don't let him go rampagin' round in the night-time, do you?" Lines of suspicion had appeared suddenly in Cap'n Seba's baked-apple face, and his sharp eyes narrowed distrustfully as he looked steadily at the boys.

Gustavus turned pale and edged up to Manuel.

"You 'n' me are partners," he said, aside, hoarsely.

"I hain't never expected to live to see Scauset infested with wild beasts and Spanish spies," said Cap'n Seba; "but when foreigners are made so much of—"

Manuel wheeled the barrow by him. He said nothing, but there was a heavy cloud on his face.

"You need not fear; I stay," he said to Gustavus. "Together we will watch in the woodshed chamber to-night."

The bear was very quiet that night, with his bruised leg covered afresh with poultices, and the cot-bed that Caddy had provided was very comfortable. At midnight Manuel was overpowered by drowsiness. Gustavus had then slept the sleep of the just for more than two hours.

A very queer noise caused them both to spring up—nothing less than the clang of the cracked old church-bell that had not rung for fifteen years. The church congregation was summoned now by the school-bell. Scauset was ashamed of its cracked old bell, now that Tooraloo and Fleetwell had new ones,' whose fine tones came stealing across the marsh.

The old bell had rung and the bear was gone! Manuel put two and two together in a bewildered way, while he threw on his clothes, Gustavus occupying himself meanwhile with protesting that he had not been asleep.

As the two boys approached the church they found that half Scauset was hurrying towards it also, and the air was full of exclamations of wonder and alarm. In the bright moonlight the little white church showed itself apparently empty and deserted. Cap'n Seba Oakes, who

lived near the church, was seen to be valiantly holding on to the knob of the front door.

"Whether it's a Spanish spy or that tarnal bear, I've got him. All of ye look out that he don't get out o' the winders!" he shouted.

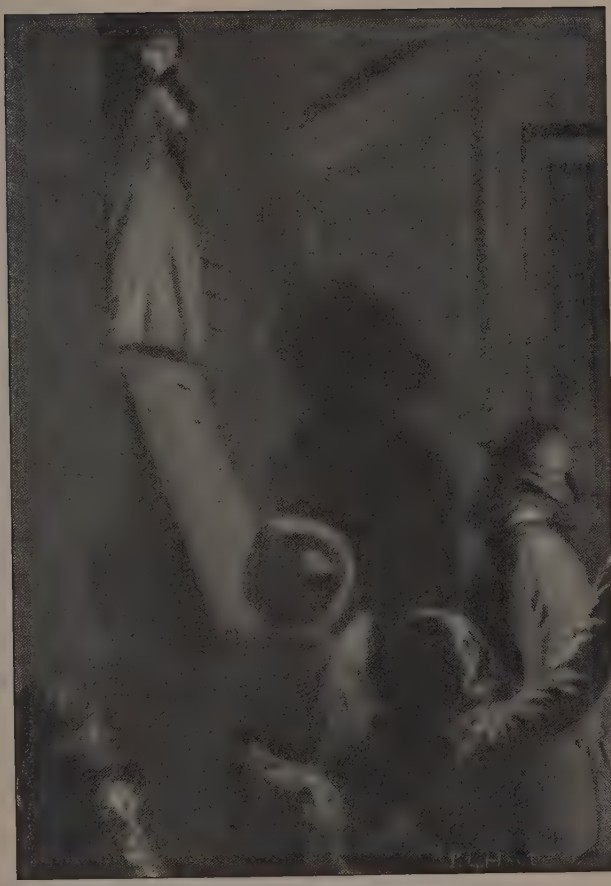
There was great excitement and much speculation. The old bell-rope was broken; it hung only half-way down the belfry stairs. To ring it one must climb the stairs, so narrow and steep that they were scarcely more than a ladder.

Some one ran for the sheriff. Before he arrived the bell rang again, a louder clang, and it was followed by a strange sound to come from a church in the small hours of the night—a baby's cry—a petulant shriek that some one tried in vain to quiet.

The sheriff, well armed, opened the door. He had a big lantern, and the bolder spirits trooped into the church after him. A girl's face peered down from the steep belfry stairs—a dark, frightened face.

"It's that Anita, the bear-girl!" whispered Gustavus.

"Oh, we did not mean to ring the bell!" she cried, piteously. "The baby pull the rope, and I could not stop him! We get in at the window;



A GIRL'S FACE PEERED DOWN

it is always right to get into church when you have no shelter! I take the baby up-stairs so we could hide. My father is arrest for Spanish spy, and Emilio he have to run away, when it is only for the bear that we have come, our own bear that was carried away from us, and we cannot get money to live without him! He is worth oh, much money! He perform before all the crowned heads of Europe." The girl had descended the stairs now, reassured, and she spoke in a loud, shrill tone. "He is the great Mé—"

"'Sh!—'sh!" came from Gustavus Nickerson with startling force.

Manuel forgot that she was a girl and he a polite little Portergee.

"You—you shut yourself up!" he cried, roughly, the more roughly perhaps because he could not see what was going to be done about all this.

CHAPTER X

THE BUILDING BOOM AND THE BEAR

"BRING the girl and the baby home to breakfast, Manny!"

That was the way in which Caddy Doane went to work to settle the puzzling problem. Here were the Portuguese people, as bold as lions, claiming their bear, after they had left him to starve on board the Delight, that they had stolen; and Caddy only wanted to be sure that the girl and the baby had some breakfast!

It was the baby, who, catching at the old, frayed rope, as they were hidden away on the belfry stairs, had rung the bell and aroused all Scauset. Cap'n Seba Oakes proposed to have the girl and the baby arrested, as Spanish spies, and lodged in Tooraloo jail forthwith.

Had not the girl admitted that either her father or her brother—one could not tell which,

she was so excited and incoherent—had been arrested as a Spanish spy, in Kingstown?

Cap'n Seba, who had hung on nobly to the church door-knob, felt that Scauset in general, and he in particular, should have the credit of discovering two Spanish spies.

"Land, Seba, what can you do with a gal and a baby, if they be Spanish spies?" Cap'n 'Siah Doane inquired.

And Cap'n Orrin Saunders, the most influential of the Scauset Selectmen, said, gravely, that he thought, seeing Scauset had voted to buy lumber to build a town hall, it had about as much as it could 'tend to, without getting mixed up with the Spanish war.

Cap'n Seba began to think that it wouldn't be well to get mixed up with the Spanish war, either; and, finally, every one agreed to Caddy Doane's proposal, as a comfortable way to settle the matter—every one, that is, except Manuel and Gustavus, and their opinion wasn't asked.

Manuel's pointed, dark-skinned face actually wore a scowl, the first one that had ever appeared upon it, for Caddy, when she asked him to carry the baby! The girl was so worn out, Caddy said, and she herself must hurry along with

little Israel, who had come out in his night-gown, at the sound of the church-bell, and was likely to get his death of cold.

Manuel scowled, but he carried the baby, keeping in the very rear of the procession that moved towards Porcupine Point.

Gustavus followed, but not without forcibly expressing the opinion that they would better be searching for the bear, that had probably been carried off by that rascally Emilio. They had, at length, discovered that it was the father who had been arrested in Kingstown as a Spanish spy.

Gustavus thought that Manuel was far too polite to girls. He seemed to feel that he must do whatever Caddy asked him to. Anita kept close to Manuel, and clung to the baby's skirts.

Her dark face was full of fierce little wrinkles that made it look old. "The girl seem kind, but it is you who have stolen our bear, when you know that without him we starve!" she said, piteously. "How can I know what you will do to the baby?"

"Well, if you ain't a cool one—even for a girl!" burst forth Gustavus from his full heart. "Don't you know that you can be took up for

running away with the Delight? And you've got the row-boat somewhere now."

"We only borrow the ship," said the girl, earnestly. "And it was so bad a one that my father and Emilio could not manage it. It strike on a rock and we come near to sink. Could we take the big bear into the little boat?" Anita loosed her hold of the baby's skirts to spread out her lean, little brown hands dramatically. "You have your great ship back again, now give us back our bear!"

The whole procession, a somewhat sleepy and tired one, now had stopped to look and listen. A yellow streak of dawn was beginning to put out the lanterns, and it fell full upon the girl, a grotesque figure in tattered finery and with great hoops of gold dangling from her ears.

"Emilio will have the bear!" she cried shrilly, angered by the boy's silence. "You cannot keep him from Emilio! He is worth much money, that bear! He is the great—"

The baby raised a sharp cry. As long as he lives Manuel will suspect that Gustavus gave it a little pinch; but it is doubtful whether Gustavus was either so hard-hearted or so quick-witted.

The girl snatched the baby angrily from Manuel.

"You hurt the baby! And it is you who have hurt the bear, in the winter, so that he may never perform again. And there is not in the wide world such a performing bear. There are many indeed that dance, but he is the great—"

"I've got a warrant for the arrest of that gal!" It was Jude Atwood, the storekeeper, who shouted, as he came hurrying across lots into the Striped Marsh road. "Land! I knew 'twas a gal or boy that broke into my store, for there wasn't anything stole but sweet stuff—canned peaches and plums and pails of raspberry jam, and the glass jars full of candy! And all the little sweet crackers! Money in the drawer and not a cent of it touched! Was that like anybody in the world but a gal?"

The girl burst into a sobbing wail, as the sheriff, following the storekeeper, laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"I have touched nothing!" she cried shrilly. "How could I break into store—a girl like me, and with the baby?"

Cap'n 'Siah wiped his head distressfully.

"Seems a terrible pity, now—a little gal like

that! I expect you've got proof, Jude Atwood!"

"Proof! Ain't the stairs in the meetin'-house covered with my tin cans and cracker crumbs?" cried Jude Atwood. "And who in nater would take the sweet stuff and leave the money, without it was a gal?"

Manuel and Gustavus exchanged uneasy glances. They were acquainted with a tooth for sweet stuff that did not belong to a girl!

Gustavus scowled anxiously at Manuel. He thought it would be just like him to tell—for a girl's sake. While it was Gustavus's theory that since the bear would probably be shot, Jude Atwood being a hard man, while the girl would go scot free—as in his experience girls always did after they had cried a while—it was quite unnecessary to say anything about the bear.

Moreover, the girl claimed that the bear was hers. In that case it was her business, not his or Manuel's, if he broke into a store!

And where was the bear? Perhaps already in the possession of Emilio. Perhaps they had planned to carry him off in the mysterious vessel that had been seen lurking about the coast.

Gustavus's small mind was in a ferment, but he felt that it was a logical mind, and that he must bring it to bear upon Manuel's softness where girls were concerned.

He gave Manuel's arm a little jerk. "When she's in jail we can find the bear and carry him off in the Delight!" he whispered. "The girl that's making trouble hardly ever gets into jail. We're awful lucky!"

Manuel's wrinkle of responsibility smoothed itself out suddenly.

"She is invite to breakfast!" he cried. "If she have break into store still she must have breakfast! And the sheriff he is invite to breakfast, too; is it not, Caddy? and the storekeeper! So then they talk over how things are and find more proof; or perhaps"—the glow faded out of Manuel's face—"or perhaps find that some other one have do the wicked deed."

Caddy seconded Manuel's invitation, and it was accepted the more readily because a conveyance must be found to take the girl to Tooraloo, and conveyances were scarce in Scauset, where there was little but marsh hay upon which to feed a horse. Moreover, they were not people who did things in haste. And Tooraloo would

be sufficiently startled by having a girl brought to its jail, even if it did not happen before breakfast time! Caddy was full of pity for the girl, and firmly believed that she told the truth when she declared that the tin cans and the crackers found upon the church stairs had not come out of Jude Atwood's store. Of course, said Caddy, there were many cans and many crackers of the same brand; every grocery store in that region kept the same. How did Jude Atwood know that they were his cans and crackers?

So there was nothing that Caddy could do except to delay that breakfast and so keep a girl and a baby from jail as long as possible—and hope and pray, while she set the tea kettle to boiling, that the real thief might be found. When Gustavus Nickerson reminded her that this was "the bear girl" and had stolen the Delight, Caddy said, "No, no! not the girl. She had to follow the others. A girl who would be so good to her poor little baby sister that her mother had left to her care when she was dying, would never, never steal."

So Caddy would not have bacon and eggs for breakfast, because they could be quickly cooked.

She had to have a chicken killed, and then she made popovers. And the town fathers' mouths watered, and Cap'n Seba Oakes said he guessed he hadn't better go home for fear a whole gang of Spanish spies might come ashore there to the Point, now they had ketched the gal,—for Caddy's fried chicken and popovers were famous. When it was decided to go over to the store and examine the premises again, while breakfast was being cooked, Caddy insisted that Manuel should go with the town fathers.

"You are so quick and sharp, Manny!" she said. "You will show them that it could not have been a girl."

Manuel went a little reluctantly; he and Gustavus were just setting out in search of the bear, which was certainly important business.

Footprints in Scauset sand are not easily traced, and there was no sign to show which way the bear had gone. Gustavus had not the courage to go towards the store with the others lest he should discover some sign that the bear was the store-breaker. He ran after Manuel and uttered a hoarse caution in his ear.

"You stick to it that 'twas the girl that broke in, anyhow, won't you Manuel?"

He did shrink back abashed at the look that Manuel turned upon him.

"A man must be honest and say truth; that come first," said Manuel.

A man! But two boys who were having such an awful time with a bear! That was different, thought Gustavus.

"They have done as bad and worse to us," he whimpered; but Manuel went along without a word, and Gustavus felt unhappy, certain that he would do nothing to hinder the bear from being found out if he were guilty.

So, after a moment's hesitation, Gustavus followed stoutly on to the store. He must protect his own interests since he had no friend to do it for him!

A shutter had been partly torn off and half a window smashed in the back part of the store. Gustavus's small, sharp eyes espied a long piece of red string among the bits of broken glass—a piece of red tape of the kind that is bound around bales of cotton cloth. Caddy had tied such a piece around the poultice on the bear's leg!

Gustavus thrust the tell-tale string into his pocket unobserved.

"Anybody must be crazy to think a bear

could break open a window like that!" he said gruffly to Manuel. "A lame bear, too!"

Manuel nodded assentingly. The bear had been able to carry off Caddy's preserves to a hollow tree in the woods, but that was a feat of agility rather than of strength.

"There ain't nothin to prove who 'twas, anyhow," said Jude Atwood, dejectedly. "And I shan't never get any pay for my goods."

And the string in little Gustavus's pocket burned as if it were red-hot. If Manuel should see it and know that their bear was the thief, he would think that they ought to pay for the stolen property; yes, sir, if it took all summer to earn the money!

He thrust the string deep down into his trousers pockets, but he whistled all the way back to the Point, just as he did when he went by the cemetery at night. And he said he didn't want any fried chicken and popovers; he would go and look for the bear. In truth he did not want to see that girl carried off to the Tooraloo jail, for, with all his shortcomings little Gustavus had a conscience; those troublesome things grow on the Cape. You would have known that they did if you could

have seen the way in which the town fathers deliberated over the proposal that Caddy made to them, after she had mellowed their hearts with her fried chicken and popovers. She proposed that the girl and the baby should be allowed to stay with her for a few days, until she had clothed them comfortably. Some of her outgrown clothes could he made to fit the girl, and it took so little for a baby! They were so destitute, Caddy said, that it would be really a disgrace to Scauset to let them go in such a condition out of her borders. And after Jude Atwood had reckoned up, three times, his losses in cans and crackers and candy, and made them less each time, and they had argued the matter and got the minister to pray over it, they decided that the girl might stay for a week with Caddy.

It was easy to see, from the first, that the conference would come to this conclusion, and the string in Gustavus's pocket grew so much less uncomfortable that he went off to the woods to look for the bear.

And Manuel, when he saw that Caddy no longer needed his support, went to see Cyrus Dence about some lumber. After all, a bear

was a trifle, he thought, compared to the "building boom" that was coming to Scauset.

The string was more comfortable in Gustavus's pocket, but when he reached that hollow pine tree in the woods there was the bear standing upright beside it, and in his mouth he held, like a pipe, a stick of Jude Atwood's pink cinnamon candy! It was thus that the great Mézul, in the days of his triumphs, had been accustomed to receive the offerings of the children.

And then conscience again had Gustavus in its grasp; for it seemed very evident who had robbed the store.

Meanwhile, from the pile of lumber beside the store, a boy's dark head had been, from time to time, thrust cautiously out for purposes of observation. The boy was large, and the space into which he had crawled was small, and there were reasons why he was very impatient to get out and away, but it was a long time before he could be sure that there was no one in sight.

The rakish-looking craft that Cap'n Seba Oakes had taken for a Spanish vessel was very near the shore this morning, and a row-boat

had put out from it for the little cove beyond the Striped Marsh.

When the boy at length emerged from his concealment, he ran towards the cove as fast as he could go.

A man who had landed from the row-boat was impatiently walking up and down the beach.

"Well, where is the bear?" he demanded.

"I could not bring him before all the people," stammered the boy. "They are afraid of a bear! Besides, he is still lame a little, and there was not time. But I bring him to you when you stop at Kingstown to-morrow."

"If he is such a bear as you say, we may want to buy him," said the man. "But how did you come by him? That's what the boss wants to know."

The boy's dark face flushed as the man looked him over from head to foot. But it might have been that he blushed only for his rags and dirt.

"I come by him honest and I sell him cheap," he said, doggedly.

The appointment was finally agreed to.

"At eleven o'clock you bring him to the long

pier," the man said. "And look sharper than you did to-day, for we can't wait!"

And then the man rowed back again to the jaunty vessel, which was, in reality, a yacht with its name, La Gitana, plainly painted at its bow—the pleasure yacht of the proprietor of the Royal Trans-Atlantic Exhibition. The boy retreated hastily to the woods where he had left the bear.

He had meant to take him to the church where his sister was, when, lurking around Cap'n 'Siah's house in the night, he had, by great good fortune, found him descending from the wood-shed window. The bell-ringing that had aroused the whole town had prevented that and he had taken the bear to the woods and tied him by a stout rope to a tree.

It was not a very secure place but there were reasons why he must hide and it was the best he could do. Now the rope was there but the bear was gone. The noose remained unbroken; it looked as if the bear had slipped out of it by himself. The boy ran about frantically in the woods, whistling softly. Then, suddenly, far out in the open road, he caught sight of a pair of sturdy

pedestrians, Gustavus and the bear, the boy's arm about the bear's neck.

Emilio's impulse was to rush out and claim the bear, but there were reasons, many and imperative, why he should restrain it. He said to himself, "But I will have him yet! At eleven o'clock to-morrow he shall be in Kingstown, and the circus man will buy him! We shall have money and go far away, and nobody shall ever find us out! It is Anita who will help me to get the bear."

For from his hiding place Emilio had discovered, by the talk of the town fathers, that Anita was at Cap'n 'Siah Doane's house, where the bear was kept. "Anita has wit only in her heels, but she shall help!"

Gustavus got the bear back into the woodshed chamber; he was so docile and went so readily that one would not have believed that he would ever risk breaking his neck to get out. But Gustavus, feeling sure that he would do that when night came, waited for Manuel to come home that they might together plan some way to fasten him securely.

He had to wait a long time, for when Manuel had reached the house that Cyrus Dence was

building, Asher Baker had appeared from his cranberry bog and had beckoned to him.

Cyrus Dence's house was being built upon land that he had bought of Cap'n 'Siah—the very land where the whale had come ashore and been exhibited, and it adjoined Asher Baker's land.

Asher was out upon his land now, every day, measuring, until every one thought that he had surely become insane.

"I want to build me a workshop," he said to Manuel. "My son James Henry's wife says we shall all be sot afire with my sittin' up nights inventin' things! I've got something in my head, now, that's goin' to make a fortune certain, and I've got to have a little place of my own to work it out in. If you'll let me have lumber enough to build it I'll give you a share of my patent when I get it, and make your fortune, too!"

Manuel looked at the pitifully-eager, worn, old face, and the trembling, twitching figure, and flung away all prudence, all thought of what Scauset—even of what Cap'n 'Siah would say.

"I bring you lumber and I help you build

the little shop!" he said. And when a half-hour afterwards, as he was talking with Cyrus Dence, Asher Baker brought to him a carefully drawn-up paper, conveying to him a share in the prospective patent of an improved knitting machine, he suppresed a smile—to save the old man's feelings—and put the paper into his pocket.

Manuel and Cyrus Dence proposed to walk together to Kingstown the next morning. Manuel wished to see the builder of the new Scauset town hall to find out how much lumber would be needed, and Cyrus Dence wished to see the same builder to suggest some changes in his house.

The Delight was going to Boston for lumber within a day or two. Gustavus must really take care of that bear himself! Moreover, there was a question whether those Portuguese people had not a right to claim it still—even although they had run away with the Delight, abandoned the bear, and were still in possession of or had sold his row-boat.

Gustavus had made a great many figures to show that the damages to the Delight and the loss of the row-boat gave Manuel a legal claim

to tne bear, to say nothing of the fact that it ought to belong to him (Gustavus), because he had found it in the woods. And just now possession—the nine points of the law—was in Gustavus's favor, and he meant that it should remain so. Manuel helped him to make the wood-shed chamber window secure; at least, those people should openly claim the bear, not steal him away; and then the two boys resolved to watch there, all night, and positively not to sleep a wink.

Towards nightfall Anita's spirits had seemed to come up with a bound. It was after Caddy had seen her speak, for a moment, to a boy, over the stone wall of the garden—a tramp who had asked her the way, she said; and if Caddy had her suspicions she said nothing, for people shook their heads at her for befriending the girl.

Anita wanted to sing for them. She sang an Italian folk-song with the aid of a tambourine, improvised from little Israel's drum, and the tea-bell. And how she sang! Cap'n Seba Oakes and Cap'n Orrin Saunders had happened in, and they said she "'peared to be bewitched." Caddy sent for Grandsir and

Grandma Fretas, and Grandma told how strong her voice had been once on a time.

Then Anita sang, in a soft, sweet, lisping voice, old Portuguese songs, and Grandsir and Grandma Fretas both wept, and even Cap'n Orrin Saunders, who was a very unsentimental Selectman, and didn't understand Portuguese, had to use his bandana handkerchief. And Manuel and Gustavus—well, Anita had not sung like this up at Putasket! They had never heard anything like it and were quite carried away. As Caddy said, it was "a perfectly beautiful evening;" but when they went up to the wood-shed chamber the bear was gone! They had not thought it necessary to keep watch in the evening; it had been late in the night when he got out before, and Anita's entertainment had been so lively and noisy that they had heard not a sound when their heavily-barricaded window was broken open.

They searched half the night for the bear, and Gustavus was angry because Manuel would keep his engagement to go to Kingstown with the schoolmaster, instead of continuing the search.

"Little Gustavus is my heart's friend, but I

have not time to play, always, the game of find and lose the bear," he said, sadly.

Gustavus, with a sore heart, walked all the way to Tooraloo, through the woods, searching. But, as often happens, the one who was not searching found.

When they were half way to Kingstown, Manuel and Cyrus Dence saw the Tooraloo baker's wagon turning from a side road into the sandy highway, a few rods in front of them.

Joel Brewster, aged ten, was driving the wagon. Suddenly, from a clump of bushes beside the road, appeared a huge bear. Now, bears were quite foreign to little Joel's experience and his tow hair fairly stood up with fright. He attempted to whip up his horse, but the beast was old, the wagon not light, and the road deep with sand; he had not seen the bear and he declined to increase his speed.

Then little Joel—it is sad to report it of a Tooraloo boy—deserted his wagon and took to the woods.

Emilio cautiously followed the bear from the shelter of the bushes; he was taking Mézul in by-paths, so far as was possible, to Kingstown.

A baker's wagon laden with cakes and pies!

This was good fortune to Emilio who had no scruples about helping himself to another's property. He mounted the front of the wagon without even stopping to look back at the travelers on the highway.

He filled the baker's basket with cakes, and was tossing some out to the bear, when the horse, turning his head suddenly, caught sight of the great beast, who had raised himself upon his hind legs and was waving his paws by way of thanks for the cakes.

A Tooraloo horse had not the courage to encounter a bear, any more than a Tooraloo small boy! He made a sudden plunge forward, and Emilio pitched out in front in such a position that the horse's flying hoof hit him in the head and both wagon-wheels passed over his body.

As Cyrus Dence and Manuel raised him carefully in their arms the boy opened his eyes and groaned; he was evidently badly hurt.

The bear, his great mouth full of cake, stood upright and begged with his paws.

"It is the bear boy! We must take him to Scauset—someway! It is Caddy who will nurse him, as she do every one," said Manuel. He

cast one wistful glance towards Kingstown, and then added slowly, using one of the large words that he was learning in his intimacy with the schoolmaster: "The building boom of Scauset, I fear, it will be complicate by bear!"

CHAPTER XI

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT MÉZUL

It was almost Christmas. Scauset had always seemed to be left out of Christmas; no one had ever had a Christmas party there, so Caddy was going to change the order of things, and have one.

Cap'n 'Siah was so irritated, at first, that he allowed himself to be sarcastic, a very unusual thing.

Then Caddy explained that she had just hinted the matter to Cap'n Orrin Saunders, and he had immediately declared that the Scauset Christmas party should be the house-warming of the new hotel! And every one was to help to decorate the hotel, and everyone was to carry a basket of goodies, and the Christmas tree was to be the biggest one ever seen on the Cape!

Manuel was burdened with a heavy care. Perhaps he had been foolish. as Cap'n 'Siah

thought, to try to help Asher Baker with his invention. Asher had been trying to invent something ever since he was a young man, and nothing had ever succeeded. This time it had been an improved knitter, to be used in a stocking factory. Manuel had not only furnished lumber and helped to build a work-shop for Asher, but he had lent him money to help in the work. Now the manager of the Dulwich stocking factory, which was no longer in operation, who was an old friend of Asher Baker, had been shown the invention, and had pronounced it utterly impracticable and useless.

The shock of disappointment had caused Asher Baker to take to his bed, and he was now threatened with brain fever. And his son James Henry's wife sharply upbraided Manuel, even in the public street, for ruining her father-in-law by encouraging and helping him!

Cap'n Seba Oakes said that, for his part, he had always known that that audacious little Portergee would yet be the ruin of Scauset.

Gustavus Nickerson had his anxieties, too, and there is no doubt that Manuel was a little trying to his "heart's friend" in those days, for he was so absorbed in the building boom and

the trouble about Asher Baker that had grown out of it, that he didn't seem to think that a bear was of any account, even the great Mézul.

He wouldn't attach the bear, as Gustavus wanted him to do, to pay for the damages to the Delight and for his row-boat, and Gustavus expected that the Selectmen would do it, to reimburse the town if it had to pay the board of the tramps.

But the town fathers didn't seem to think that a bear was of any account. They had not yet discovered that he was the great Mézul and worth five thousand dollars. There had been interruptions that seemed providential every time that important secret had been upon the point of popping out.

And Gustavus had taken Manuel's advice and was "strengthening his mind" and trying to acquire the great and invaluable art of holding his tongue.

There was no game of "find and lose the bear" now. He was kept safe in the wood-shed chamber, and Gustavus encouraged Scauset's fear that made it give him the whole of the road when he took Mézul out for an airing.

Emilio was silent and surly as he began to recover, and never mentioned the bear; and Anita said that she was heart-sick of tramping with him, and wished she had a little place to stay in and be "home girl" instead of street singer and bear woman, and that made Caddy cry. You see Caddy was soft-hearted and seemed to forget that those people had stolen the Delight and behaved very meanly about the bear.

When, in the fall, Emilio had recovered and the subject of having them arrested had been again agitated, Gustavus had felt that it was time for a little diplomacy on his part. That red string that he had found in the store, after it was entered by thieves, was still in his trousers pocket. It was worn and frayed now. He carefully changed it to the pocket of his Sunday trousers every Saturday night, and he always hid his trousers at night. His sister Viola was the kind of a girl who would take a boy's trousers on pretence of wishing to mend them, and find out what there was in the pockets.

Gustavus hung around the house at the Point until one day he found Anita alone, except for the baby. She was sitting on the flat stone by

THE GIRL SNATCHED AT THE STRING

the gate, under the withering hollyhocks, when Gustavus approached her.

Anita smiled at him. She was becoming friendly in her manner and Gustavus had shown appreciation of her singing.

"Toraloo jail is a fearful place," remarked Gustavus, leaning upon the fence, in an easy, conversational attitude. "There's mice there—and rats." The color fled from Anita's dark-skinned face and her eyes dilated. "Orfle cold in the winter, too; I expect the baby would die there! Look at here now!" Gustavus' tone changed suddenly to one of confidential persuasion. "If you'll agree to go away and leave the bear—why, I'm the only one that can prove who broke into the store! And if I do think an orfle lot of the bear I'll risk his life—"

Gustavus drew slowly from his pocket the long red string that he had found among the bits of broken glass in the store, the string that, as he thought, Caddy had tied around the poultice on the bear's leg.

The girl snatched fiercely at the string—but Gustavus held on.

Then she burst into a storm of angry tears.

"You are a bad, wicked boy to say you found it in the store. May not a poor girl lose her hair string anywhere? Everyone turn against poor Portuguese, every one but the good Caddy and—and Manuel that is our countryman and has not the bad heart like you!"

Her hair-string! It seemed that the red tape that came on cotton cloth was used for different purposes and it was not, after all the bear that had been the burglar. Gustavus's feelings were divided between relief at the bear's safety and chagrin at the failure of his diplomacy.

The trouble that his conscience had given him about that string, bidding him tell of the bear and keep those people from going to jail, had been all unnecessary! He did not care how soon they went to jail now!—he was not going to be soft-hearted like Caddy and Manuel—Manuel who was but a false friend and would not attach the bear. Gustavus walked quickly away from Anita's accusations and tears; even Gustavus did not like to see a girl cry; but he thrust the red string deeper into his pocket. It was different proof from what he had thought it, but quite as strong.

It happened a few days after this little inter-

view with Anita that Gustavus carried his brother Ludovico's dinner to the summer hotel that Cap'n Orrin Saunders was building. Ludovico was lame but he had a little inside job. Almost everybody in Scauset had a job, now, and went about with a busy and bustling air.

On the steps beside one of the workmen's dinner pails he found a copy of the "Barnsteeple Patriot," and sat down to read it. Since Gustavus's little journey into the world he thought more about what was going on outside of Scauset than he had done before. "Performing Animals," was the heading that first caught his eye and promised something more interesting to him than any news could be. The article began with an account of elephants that walked the tight-rope and seals that played the hand-organ, giving the names of noted performers. Presently Gustavus's freckled face was aflame and his pulses beating like trip-hammers. "The bear has always been a difficult animal to train, and one or two tricks are, generally speaking, the extent of a bear's accomplishments," he read. "A Russian bear, known as the great Mézul, at one time the pet of a Turkish pasha, had,

however, many and varied accomplishments; he could shoot at a mark with great skill, could handle the dishes as a waiter at a dinner party with extraordinary deftness" (Caddy's preserves! murmured Gustavus, breathlessly), "and if given a fiddle would draw the bow across the strings and march to his own accompaniment. He is said to have shown real affection for his master and his keepers, although sometimes, as is almost always the case with a tamed bear, the natural ferocity of the wild beast would break out."

Gustavus read that clause doubtfully; it didn't seem as if that could mean Mézul.

"Mézul was stolen from a circus called the Royal Trans-Atlantic Exhibition, in London, about three years ago, by a man who had been his keeper. A reward of a thousand dollars was offered for his return, but he has never been found."

The workman found a corner torn off his paper, and Ludovico found his dinner but no Gustavus; he only caught a glimpse of the boy's sturdy figure running across the fields to the new town hall, where Manuel was delivering lumber to-day.

But, as he ran, Gustavus reflected. Manuel had now become so entirely a business man as to be capable of thinking that a thousand dollars was better than a bear; while Gustavus only wished to prove that the bear did not belong to those people, so that he might claim it.

Now, of course, this point of view cannot be defended on the score of morals; but wait!—little Gustavus's conscience would always get in its work, if you gave it time.

On second thought, he would not show that scrap of paper to Manuel; this was a world in which a fellow would better attend to his own business. And this was business that required more diplomacy!

Other people in Scauset would read that article, but no one who knew that this bear was the great Mézul.

But time went by and Gustavus, although he had kept his secret, had not been able to think of any stroke of diplomacy that promised him possession of the bear.

He had composed several letters to the Royal Trans-Atlantic Exhibition, London, and torn them to pieces. He had, in imagination, confronted Emilio with the accusation of having

stolen the bear from the long-named show and seen Emilio and Anita run away in terror and leave the bear behind. But he knew that in reality they were not likely to run away. Emilio was still very lame and the baby ill; arrest seemed to have less terror for them than facing the world.

Caddy thought Manuel unkind that he would take so little interest in the Christmas preparations, and when, less than a week before Christmas, he started off to New York, with quite indefinite explanations as to his reasons and the length of his stay, she almost regretted that the building boom had ever come to Scauset.

Queer things happened in that Christmas week. No sooner had Manuel gone than Emilio, taking advantage of his absence, as people supposed, slipped away with the bear! And the next news was that Gustavus Nickerson had also disappeared—probably in pursuit of the bear.

His sister Viola said she had always known that Gustavus's silliness about the show business would be his ruin.

Manuel went directly to New York, and almost all the luggage that he carried was the

model of Asher Baker's improved knitting machine, in Cap'n 'Siah's old carpet bag.

The owner of the yacht on which he had been sailing-master was a patent lawyer in New York. Manuel had so strong a belief that there was more that was novel and valuable in Asher Baker's invention than the manager had seen, that he had determined to make all the effort he could to secure a patent upon it.

He had not told Cap'n 'Siah anything more than he had told Caddy—that it was business; their faith in him was not yet equal to such a strain as that!

Manuel received a heart-warming welcome from the owner of the yacht. There had been a happening during that cruise of the Petrel which had endeared him to the lawyer and his family—but that would be a whole story in itself.

He was invited to dinner in a very fine mansion, and if you think he did not carry himself in a way to do credit to Scauset, it is because you do not know how fine a little Portergee's manner's may be—especially with a graft of the the simple refinement of Caddy's training.

Better even than the kindly reception and

the social attention was the verdict of an expert, employed by the patent lawyer, upon poor Asher Baker's invention. It was of value, possibly of great value, and the patent would be secured with as little delay as possible.

"I telegraph him to James Henry's wife—no, I have the joy to tell the poor Asher Baker myself!" said Manuel to himself, and made preparations to return hastily to Scauset, after being a little extravagant in buying gifts for the Scauset Christmas tree.

But before he set out upon his return there came a telegram from Cyrus Dence, who, alone, knew where he was going.

"Gustavus gone; probably in pursuit of Emilio and bear."

Manuel was not surprised that Emilio had gone with the bear; he had expected that, and sometimes thought it would be the easiest solution of the difficulty. But it never had occurred to him that Gustavus would go in pursuit, and, for a moment, he inwardly called his heart's friend a little idiot, adding, directly after, with a thrill of sympathy: "But the heart of little Gustavus he have set it upon the bear."

In what direction would Emilio be likely to go with the bear, and where should he look for little Gustavus?

It was while he was questioning that his eye was caught by a poster upon a wall. "The Royal Trans-Atlantic Exhibition; Greatest Show in the World. Marvelous Performances of Trained Animals."

Now, Manuel had not seen that article about performing animals in the "Barnsteeple Patriot," nor had he ever heard of this show, but it immediately occurred to him that Emilio would be likely to try to sell the bear, since, without Anita, he could not hope to make a street success with him; and, moreover, he had always expressed a dislike for him, and ever since he was convalescent had not spent as many minutes in his society in the wood-shed chamber as Gustavus had spent hours.

That show had been advertised all about the country. Manuel remembered to have seen its flaming signs in Kingstown, although it condescended to nothing but large cities, and had never been nearer the Cape than Boston. What more likely than that Emilio had brought the bear to New York? It was probable that he

could obtain from some of his Kingstown countrymen funds to help him on the way.

It was the last performance of this great show that was advertised upon the placard. Manuel hurried, as fast as he could, to the huge building where it was given.

In his haste he had not observed the date. The performances were all over, the properties were being carted away, and the great temporary building was being taken down. But some of the "bosses" of the different departments were still there, and around one of them was gathered a throng of workmen, listening to the shrill and excited explanation of a boy.

It was Emilio's voice that came to Manuel's ears, as he stood upon the outskirts of the crowd; it was Emilio who was wildly shouting and gesticulating!

"I would bring you the bear that day, last summer, in Kingstown, but I got hurt. Now I have just found out that the show is here, and I get here as fast as I could, though my head hurt me, and I am still lame. And such a bear is a great bargain for five hundred dollars; never will you find such bear again!"

"But where is he?" demanded the "boss."

"You don't expect us to buy a bear that we haven't seen? 'Twas just the same there at the Cape, last summer; you talked about your wonderful bear, but we could not see him. We're looking for a bear all right, but we don't want any common one."

"It is infamous rascal that hinder me!" cried Emilio—"now, when I bring him through the street to show you! He live down there in the sand, and he make friends with the bear and he follow me when I bring him here to New York! In the street we meet, and he have ways to draw the bear to him. The bear turn upon me! The bear come out sometimes, no matter how gentle. He want to go with the boy, the infamous rascal that have bewitch him, and he turn upon me so and the crowd is so great that I have to carry him back to the house of my countrymen, where I lodge. But I will bring him to you—to the steamer to-morrow. There was great crowd in street, and police come, and I think the infamous rascal—Gustavus, he call himself—is now in jail and will hinder no more. Before the steamer sail I bring you the bear!"

"Well, bring him—but remember we know a bear that is worth having when we see him!

And see here! how did you come by him? We want to know that, too."

But Emilio had departed, contented with the permission to bring the bear to the steamer.

Manuel drew a long sigh and proceeded to the rescue of his heart's friend.

The game of "find the bear and lose him" seemed likely to begin again, and it was much more difficult and exciting in New York than in Scauset.

And to-morrow was the day before Christmas! He had planned to start for home that night and be at home in time for the Scauset Christmas party.

He found a policeman to show him the way to the street that Emilio had mentioned, but when he reached it there was no sign of a crowd or of Gustavus. He wandered up and down for hours, seeking; but small sensations are soon over in a city street; no one knew which way the boy went who had quarreled with another boy about a bear.

But could he go home and leave his heart's friend alone in New York?

When he reached his lodging house he found there a note from the lawyer, saying that he

wished to see him again the next forenoon. So he would not have gone home in any case; but for all the forenoon he could not go to the rescue of Gustavus.

When his business was finished he sought that street again, and again he looked in vain for a clew to Gustavus's whereabouts. Suddenly it occurred to him that Gustavus might keep on Emilio's track and follow him to the steamer.

It took some time to find out where the steamer was lying upon which the circus was to sail, but he reached the wharf at last.

There was a scene of great confusion; a crowd had gathered to witness the embarkation. An excited urchin explained to Manuel how the little elephants had gone over the plank, holding on to each other's tails, and that that was the biggest elephant of all that was just being swung on board, by means of a derrick, in a huge, red cage.

The decks of the steamer were covered with golden chariots and fairy floats, cages, and wardrobe wagons, and the great hippopotamus, and the cages of polar bears and sea-lions.

There was no chance of finding Gustavus here, thought Manuel, too anxious about his

heart's friend to have any eye for the wonders he saw, when, suddenly, Emilio's shrill voice struck again upon his ear. He was on board the steamer explaining why he was late. He had feared the crowd in the streets, the infamous rascal of whom he had told them had dogged his steps; he had enticed the bear and he had claimed protection from him in vain.

The "infamous rascal," a wayworn, unkempt figure, had, for a moment, the impatient boss's ear, as he shouted from the pier, "It's no wonder he's afraid!" he cried, shrilly; "for he stole the bear from this very circus! He's Mézul—the great Mézul! He's worth five thousand dollars. You advertised, yourselves, to pay a thousand dollars to any one that would bring him back! Yes, sir! he's the great Mézul—"

"Where's the bear, anyhow?" called the boss. But Emilio had run across the plank and slipped away in the crowd. "It may be true—that looked like Michael Cereda's boy Emilio, and we knew that Michael stole the bear. But, look here, sonny! This steamer is going to sail! We've got the bear aboard. If he's Mézul we shall know it and you shall have your reward. You'll be telegraphed to from the other side.

Now tell me your name, say it quick, and say it plain!"

Gustavus said it slowly and absently. The bear upon the deck stood up and begged to Gustavus, then uttered a pleading cry that was almost like a child's.

Gustavus sprang to the plank. The boss had turned away as soon as he had written down the name. In the confusion no one observed Gustavus—no one but Manuel. He shouted to him to come back; the great steamer was about to swing off!

Gustavus did not hear or heed; the bear wagged his paws and whined, and Gustavus had ears for nothing else. Could one see his heart's friend, who was but small, carried off to sea with the circus, carried off alone on an ocean steamer across the broad Atlantic? Manuel, too, sprang upon the plank and crossed to the deck.

How wide, how wide was the chasm that the first swing of the great steamer made! It seemed a sudden severing from home, from friends, from all the world!

Gustavus recognized Manuel and clung to him with a great, dry sob. The confusion was still too great for any one to observe them.

There were strange, homesick, almost human cries from the depths of the ship, where multitudes of animals were stored—the wild laugh of the hyena, the whimpering of the elephants, the chatter of the monkeys. Through the evening dusk came a far-off chime of Christmas bells. Gustavus put his arm around Manuel's neck and his sturdy frame trembled.

"This is an orfle queer fix; not much like a Scauset Christmas," he murmured. "But as long as I've got you, Manny, and the bear—"

A sudden joyful recollection pierced Manuel's bewildered dismay.

"The pilot-boat!" he cried. "He meet the steamer off Sandy Hook! They will know by that time that he is the great Mézul, and you will be sure of the thousand dollars. Perhaps you share a little with Emilio, since it was not he that steal the bear, and he have some claim. And to-morrow we go home to Scauset. It will still be Christmas. The ice-cream himself"—Gustavus had a sweet tooth—"Caddy will not have let the freeze go out of him!"

"How you think of things!" said Gustavus, and the red returned to his freckled cheeks.

"There is never a scrape without a way out of him," said Manuel, calmly.

CHAPTER XII

THE TESTING OF THE BEAR

THE circus steamer was sailing steadily out of New York Harbor with Manuel Silva and Gustavus Nickerson on board.

Gustavus' fears had been relieved at first when Manuel told him of the pilot-boat, but yet he was not sure that he wished to go back and leave the bear.

He was full of the triumph of having made Emilio virtually acknowledge that he or his father had stolen the bear. It was that which he had wished to do rather than to seek for the reward.

"Yes, sir, he stole that bear! Would he have sneaked away like that, if he hadn't?" he demanded eagerly of Manuel, even while Manuel's little peaked Portuguese face was still white with excitement and dismay. Manuel did not properly feel the importance of that

bear. How they should get back to New York was what he was thinking of; and while the beautiful lights of New York were being merged into a red flame upon the sky, and the deck under his feet began to rise and fall with the swell of the sea, he listened eagerly for the whistle of the pilot-boat.

The manager, who had gone below with the bear, did not return. There was still a great hurry and bustle and the sound of tramping feet. The strains of a band suddenly mingled with the strange, wild cries of the animals from below.

"We're going home, we're going home!" It was a tune that they sometimes sang in Scauset prayer-meetings. Manuel was afraid that it might make Gustavus feel frightened and homesick.

It caused a little constriction in his seventeen-year-old throat to think what would happen if they couldn't go back in the pilot-boat. His thoughts were a queer medley. He saw Cap'n 'Siah, lonely, with the checker-board (Cap'n 'Siah thought that no one could play checkers like Manny), and Caddy wiping away her tears that they might not fall on the flapjacks, of

which she made so few because Manny was not there. Of the patent he was to secure on Asher Baker's knitting-machine — when, oh, when would the poor old man know that his life-long dream, at which people had mocked and jeered, was coming true? Of the show that he and Gustavus had once had on the Striped Marsh beach—that, of course, was the association of ideas, and of a great tunny that got away from them when Gustavus wanted him for a show.

Gustavus would be likely to get his fill of a show if they couldn't get off the steamer! "Hark! I think I hear him—the whistle of the pilot-boat!" he said, eagerly.

"I don't want to go back," said Gustavus, firmly. "I can't go back without the bear!"

"Think!" said Manny, earnestly, and he pointed back toward the great red light. "Behind is Scauset! We that are young must take care of him and of the building boom that we have start. No one shall say that we run away from our own town because he is small!"

Perhaps these sentiments were a little too elevated for Gustavus, for he folded his arms resolutely, and the cloud did not lift from his freckled face.

"To run away on a circus steamer to Liverpool, that is a worse thing far than to run away to Boston!" said Manuel, severely.

"I never! The steamer ran away with me," said Gustavus, sulkily. "And I think more of the bear than I do of Scauset, or anything!"

A shrill little whistle sounded across the waters, and Manuel rushed off in search of the manager and the man who had carried off the the bear. He met them coming up from below, and with them was a queer little old man whose wrinkled face looked like a mummy's under his red skull-cap. The bear, walking as if he were very lame, and with the wild-beast look in his eyes, as the boys had seen it when they discovered him upon the derelict Delight, was being tugged along by the little old man.

"It is a stupid beast like any other!" he cried, in a shrill voice. "He would be vicious, too, if one did not know how to handle him like me! It is only a poor old street bear that may have danced in his day, but is now so lame that he will never dance again. And the boy wants the thousand dollars' reward that was offered for Mézul—the great Mézul—that has astonished all the crowned heads of Europe, and was

covered with decorations! He may have a look like Mézul." The old man turned suddenly and looked in a bewildered way at the bear. "But he knows no tricks; he has no intelligence. I can make a bear show all that he knows, I, if any one in the world. I have trained animals for more than fifty years; there is not a bear of any reputation in the world but I know him! There are few, few; a bear is most often a sulky, stupid brute—like that."

The bear had suddenly caught sight of Gustavus, and, under the great glaring deck light, he drew himself up on his hind legs and wagged his great paws beseechingly. The wild light in his eyes gave way to an almost human softness.

The little old man thrust his skull-capped head close to the bear's, and stared at him again in a puzzled way.

"If he is Mézul, why, it wouldn't do to let him go," said the manager; "he'd be worth more than a thousand dollars to us."

The great steamer had slackened its speed. The little screaming pilot-boat was alongside.

"We go off in the pilot-boat," said Manuel, anxiously. There were more important things

in the world than a bear, he thought, sensibly, whether he were the great Mézul or not.

"We have not try to cheat you," he added, earnestly, for Manuel was careful of his reputation as a strictly honorable business man. "The collar we find upon the bear's neck it say plainly he is the great Mézul, and worth five thousand dollars."

The manager shook his head.

"It was a good many years ago that Mézul was worth five thousand dollars," he said. "And this old fellow, it seems, isn't Mézul. We should be glad enough to pay the reward that we offered if he were. We'll have that pilot-boat wait a minute until the matter is definitely settled. I never saw Mézul myself, but I must say that this fellow doesn't look to me like a common bear."

"This bear can do nothing! Not a trick!" cried the little old trainer, shrilly. Again Gustavus held up his hand, and the bear began to march, slowly, stiffly, because of his lameness.

The trainer laughed—a cackling, scornful laugh.

"There are bears, a hundred, that go about

the streets with hurdy-gurdies that can do better than that," he said. "And you call him the great Mézul! Why, listen, and I will tell you what Mézul could do! A glass of water, full, brimming, would Mézul balance upon his nose, and not a drop would be spilt!—not a drop would be spilt!"

Gustavus was grave, and the color burned hotly in his freckled cheeks.

"Try the bear with a glass! Give the old fellow a fair chance!" cried one of the circus people.

The pilot-boat screamed impatiently, and Manuel took Gustavus by the arm.

"Come, we will go home; you and I and the bear; home to Scauset," he said.

"If—if he is really Mézul, will you take me with him?" demanded Gustavus, brokenly. "Yet I could not go either." Gustavus looked back, as if they were the Scauset shores over which the great red light hung behind them. "I have found out that a boy is foolish to run away!" He turned to the manager, and his sturdy little frame seemed to grow taller. "I am glad you think he is not Mézul," he cried. "I would rather have him than to have the

money. If he is a poor, old, stupid bear that can do nothing, as that man says, I like him all the same. We had a hard time together, in the woods, in the winter; we were cold and hungry together, and—and helped each other. We like each other, he and I."

Gustavus turned away—all those circus people were staring—and furtively drew his jacket sleeve across his eyes.

"It is strange that you should try to palm him off on us as the great Mézul, if you do not want to part with him! It is strange that you should find out how fond you are of him only when you cannot cheat us out of the thousand dollars!" said the little old man, sneeringly.

He was evidently nettled by the bear's stubborn refusal even to dance at his bidding, while he had done it readily at sight of Gustavus.

"I never try to cheat!" cried Gustavus, indignantly. "I can prove—"

"Here, try him with the glass!" cried one of the circus men, and he handed to Gustavus a wine-glass brimming with water.

The bear was down upon all fours now, and stood close beside Gustavus, the boy's hand resting upon his head.

Gustavus stood still with the glass in his hand, and his sturdy little frame actually trembled. The bear seemed trying to rise again upon his hind legs, but Gustavus's hand remained upon his head and held him down. He shook his head impatiently, those nearest to him saw a sudden fire and frolic in his eye; a look that showed he was once a merry fellow.

Gustavus hesitated only for a moment. Then he handed back the glass.

"We will go home, Bub!—you and Manny and I; home to Scauset," he said. And with his hand in the bear's collar he started firmly for the lower deck, from whence they could board the pilot-boat.

Scornful titters and some murmurs of pity followed the little party.

"Could he do it—that bear? Could a pig do it!" cried the little old trainer in utter derision.

That gibe rang in Gustavus's ears and would not be drowned by the screech of the boat.

The little craft tossed up and down in a heavy sea. The great circus steamer steamed on into the wide Atlantic.

"That was an orfle great chance for a fellow, if he hadn't run away once. Yes, sir, I think

I could have made them take me," said little Gustavus, who still kept his hand in the bear's collar. "But I was afraid they wouldn't, and I didn't want to go. And I couldn't let them have the bear without me! No, sir, fellows have got their feelings for each other when they've been through troubles together. I'll never part from Mézul."

The pilot, who had heard the reason of the steamer's long delay, winked facetiously at Manuel.

"He sticks to it that he's got the right bear, don't he?" he said.

"Tommy, make way for your uncle." That was the rollicking strain that the band played as the great steamer sailed away, and cheers, that seemed to the boys full of derision, followed the pilot-boat and the bear.

"I'll live to show 'em! I'll prove to 'em yet that he's the great Mézul!" cried Gustavus, and he shook his stout, freckled fist at the steamer.

The pilot—he was not the red-faced, jovial story-book pilot, but a lean, little man who looked as if he had been salted and dried by sea and wind, like a cured codfish—winked again openly at Manuel.

"You needn't let on any more, sonny," he said, easily. "You're amongst friends. Considerable of a temptation for a little country feller like you to get a thousand dollars by makin' folks think you'd got a bear with a reputation. I guess, mebbe, they're like folks with a reputation, anyhow. They don't always amount to any more 'n anybody else."

Gustavus's eyes flashed.

"So you think I'm a cheat, do you?" he cried angrily. "You heard what the trainer said that no bear but Mézul could do? Will you give me a glass of water?"

There was only a glass tumbler on board the pilot-boat. Gustavus filled it full to the brim from a water-pitcher that the pilot handed him. Then he waved his hand, and the bear arose upon his hind legs in the cabin of the little pilot-boat, which was scarcely large enough for him to stand upright. Manuel laid his hand upon the shoulder of "his heart's friend," which was fairly quivering with indignation and excitement.

"No bear could balance the glass of water on his nose while the boat pitch and toss so," he said.

"But you don't know him. You've been attending to your building boom," cried little Gustavus, in whose bosom there had always rankled a certain indifference that Manuel had shown toward the bear. Manuel clearly thought that a bear, even the great Mézul, was only boys' play. "When he carried off Caddy's preserves, out of the window, down the spout, and across the fields, I knew there were more things that he could do, and I tried him. Attention! Steady now, Bub."

That gay and frolicsome light appeared again in the old beast's eyes. He held his head up eagerly for the glass that Gustavus placed upon his nose. He carried it with apparent ease as he moved about, adapting his motions to the pitch and toss of the boat in a way that was quite wonderful to see.

"Pooh! That is nothing," said little Gustavus, when a chorus of applause arose, the heartiest coming from the sailors who looked in at the door. "If I had a long-stemmed glass and space for him, then you should see."

"As there was on the deck of the steamer," said Manuel, quietly. "And yet you would not let him try."

Gustavus turned away his head shamefacedly, and strangled a great sob in his throat. Truly the struggle between different emotions had been hard for little Gustavus.

"Then they would have known that he was the great Mézul, and I should have had to give him up. Now he is only Bub, and my bear for ever 'n' ever! That fellow Emilio will never dare to claim him again, and the circus people can't. He's my bear, and one of these days I'll show them what he can do! And if he couldn't do a thing, if he was always old and lame and stupid, as he was with the trainer, he'd be Bub all the same, and I'd rather have him than to have five thousand dollars."

They landed from the little pilot-boat, and stood again upon the long, long wharf—Manuel, Gustavus, and the bear.

The great city was still ablaze with Christmas lights and alive with Christmas bells—the great, strange city. And the Scauset Christmas festival must be held without them. But to-morrow they would go home, and their hearts were gay.

"He's mine for ever 'n' ever, and some day I'll show 'em!" repeated Gustavus.

CHAPTER XIII

GUSTAVUS KEEPS THE BEAR

Some day he would prove to those circus people that the bear was Mézul, thought Gustavus, for they never could take him away from him now that they had declared, in the presence of witnesses, that he was not their bear.

That fellow Emilio would never dare to claim him again, either. Had he not disappeared like a streak of lightning when he, Gustavus, had accused him of having stolen the bear? A fellow who had any reason or justice on his side would have shown fight a little.

So said Gustavus to himself triumphantly, as they stood upon the New York pier and at that very moment, from the shadow of a tall building, out stepped Emilio!

The bear growled like a muttering of distant thunder, just as he always did when anything that he disliked came near him, just as he

would always growl at Tom Tinker, Cap'n Seba Oakes' yellow dog, long before any one else saw him.

"You couldn't make them believe you, could you?" cried Emilio scornfully, and his dark, sullen face was full of triumph. "A fine plan to make me out a thief and get my bear from me! What tricks would he do for you?—you who know no more how to train a bear than does a sand-peep? If there had been more time I would not have gone away and let myself be called a thief. But I did not want to be carried away on the steamer. I am my own man now" —Emilio drew himself up to his full seventeen years of height—"it is a dog that they make of you in those shows! I thought you would come back on the pilot-boat. Manuel Silva has a head on his shoulders. You—you little Cape Cod-fish have only a top to you!"

Gustavus' temper came near to getting into his fists, and the bear growled sympathetically.

"See! You have teach my own bear to growl at me, but for all that I could make him tear you to pieces. There is always bear in bear! Now give him to me and be thankful if I let you carry your little cod-fish skin whole to Scauset."

Give the bear to him indeed!

"Well, haven't you got cheek?" said little Gustavus, and tightened his grip upon the bear's collar.

But Manuel shook his head gravely. "There is question of right," he said. "It is still to prove that the bear was stolen. They abandon him, but the vessel was aground and they have their own lives to save. Frightened bear he is hard to manage. It is not easy to get bear from vessel into row-boat. We all come to the house where I stop and we talk over who have right to the bear!"

All this Manuel said with the air of a judge, while both boys had their hands under the bear's collar, and he was growling—like very near and heavy thunder now.

Gustavus scowled darkly at Manuel at first; it really seemed as if he were taking that fellow's side. But Manuel's argument prevailed with him and the bear's argument prevailed with Emilio!

They went through by-ways, for it was well to avoid the crowded thoroughfares, with the bear in his present mood, to the Portuguese boarding-house that Manuel had found.

The landlady gave them a late dinner privately, and did not object to the bear, who growled between his chicken bones, and would not dance in the kitchen for the maids and the children.

Manuel laid the bear case before Emilio when his heart was softened by a good dinner, including a Christmas pudding that was nearly all nuts and plums, and that only a Portugese cook knows how to make.

Manuel reasoned like a lawyer and a philosopher, but Gustavus thought that he was more than fair to the other side. He could not convince Emilio that Gustavus ought to have the bear, but, from refusing to quitclaim him for less than five hundred dollars, before that Portugese dinner, he agreed in the middle of it to let him go for fifty, and after the Portugese pudding he agreed to let Gustavus have him for fifteen and to throw in all that he knew about shows and about the management of bears, plainly written down.

When one considered that Emilio had been born and brought up in a circus, and had traveled with a bear almost all his life, one can see how valuable such information might be to a

boy like Gustavus, whose great ambition had always been to have a show.

Fifteen dollars! But, alas! Gustavus had no funds whatever. Never before had poverty stabbed him so keenly, for it really seemed that Emilio had a lawful claim to the bear.

Manuel, after only a moment's hesitation, took some bills from his pocket. He did not regard bears very highly as an investment, but could he do less than this for his heart's friend?

But having taken the money from his pocket, he thrust it in again and called for another plate of the pudding.

The eagerness in Emilio's face changed to anxiety. There was, in truth, but a very faint and feeble jingling in Emilio's pocket. And little Gustavus turned so pale that he looked astonishingly freckled.

"Your father it is he who must sign paper giving up all claim to the bear," said Manuel, calmly eating his pudding. Gustavus was filled with admiration, for he knew that he should never have thought of that.

"I will get paper from him," said Emilio quickly. "He is here in New York. I will bring it to you to-night, or, if I cannot find him,

then early in the morning. I will take the bear with me and bring him, too, in the morning."

"No, you will leave the bear. I keep him here and give you the fifteen dollar, like man of honor," said Manuel.

Again Manuel's argument was reinforced by the bear's, for he snarled fiercely when Emilio went near him.

Emilio went lingeringly, as if he suspected that the boys meant to run away with the bear; but he went. And when he had gone Gustavus and the bear both rejoiced. The bear performed the tumbler trick also, and it was gay that night in the Portuguese kitchen.

But Gustavus murmured drowsily to Manuel, just before sleep overcame him, that he wouldn't let the bear do that again until he could make a great sensation with him—perhaps first in the new town hall at Scauset.

Emilio appeared early the next morning with a dingy scrap of paper on which was written, in a curious mixture of English-Portuguese and Portuguese-English, a bill of sale of the bear. It was properly signed, "Michael Fereda," signed in a queer, cramped, almost illegible hand, different from that in which it

was written, which Manuel knew to be Emilio's, and he was satisfied that it was a genuine signature. And it was properly "witnessed" by the signature of two Portuguese names.

What Emilio knew about the show business was contained in a bulky envelope and sealed.

"Me, I go into another business," said Emilio, grandly, "and I sell you all cheap—dirt cheap!"

It was a happy party that set out for Scauset, that morning, Manuel, Gustavus, and the bear. One would have thought that the bear knew he was going back to the Cape and was glad of it. He turned somersaults until the maids in the kitchen were convulsed with laughter and showed what a merry fellow he had once been.

Manuel would not give Gustavus time to open Emilio's bulky envelope until they were on the train homeward bound. Manuel did not wish to lose all of the Scauset Christmas, and he wished to carry poor Asher Baker his heart's desire—the news that his patent had been granted while it might yet be called a Christmas gift.

The bear had to go in the baggage car, and, for a while, Gustavus stayed there with him,

but when he had gone contentedly to sleep he returned to Manuel in the passenger car.

To his surprise Manuel seemed anxious about the bear and thought that Gustavus would better not have left him—Manuel, who had at first scoffed at the idea that it was necessary to stay in the baggage car at all.

"I'm going to find out whether that fellow says anything about his being Mézul, anyhow," said Gustavus. For there had been so much noise and confusion in the baggage car that he had found it impossible to read.

He settled himself in a seat and broke the seal of the envelope; but Manuel, with a sharp line between his brows, had hurried off to the baggage car to take care of the bear.

The truth was that Manuel had seen both Emilio and his father hanging about the station, and he instantly suspected that they meant to recover the bear.

Manuel walked through the long train and discovered no trace of either of them, but they were tramps, and would know how to secrete themselves. Manuel was not wholly reassured, and he remained in the baggage-car, where Gustavus shortly joined him, red and fuming with wrath.

The directions for managing a show, written on a very large sheet of paper, were contained in these few words:

"A feller that don't no a famous Performing Bear from a ordinary one and thinks he can get the start of Emilio Fereda, had better go and burry himself in a sand-bank."

"But I believe the bear is Mézul, all the same, don't you?" said Gustavus, after he had candidly expressed his opinion of that sneak of an Emilio.

"Yes, I do, and I think we've got to take care of him, too!" said Manuel. And he told Gustavus of his suspicion that Emilio and his father were on the train, and the boys did not let the bear go out of their sight until they had him safely locked in the wood-shed chamber of Cap'n 'Siah's house at Porcupine Point.

There they were a little inclined to be ashamed of their fears, and Gustavus soon abandoned his purpose to sleep in the wood-shed chamber to protect the bear. They decided that it was probably true that Emilio and his father were going into another business, and had no further use for an old bear, so would leave Gustavus in joyful, undisputed possession of the bear.

CHAPTER XIV

EMILIO'S TRICK

When the little Portergee, Manuel Silva, came home from New York, Scauset people began to wonder, as they had done the winter before, what he was going to do with himself. Even now that there was a "building boom," Scauset was not a very lively place in the winter, and Manuel was what the townspeople called "up and comin'." Gustavus Nickerson, Manuel's "heart's friend," was the most eager to discover what the little Portergee was going to do, because, whatever it was, he meant to do it, too.

Manuel and he had accomplished great things together in New York, or so Gustavus felt. They had brought the bear home in triumph, and Manuel had paid the rascal, Michael Fereda, who claimed him, so now Gustavus was sole owner of the great Mézul.

Of course he meant to pay Manuel just as soon as possible, and he had clearly proved to his mother and his brother Ludovico—his sister Viola, who wanted to manage everybody, was married now, and Cyrus Dence, the schoolmaster, had all the trouble of her—that he must go into business rather than to go to school. He further declared that schooling did not "take" with him any more than vaccination, which he had suffered three times in vain. And in fact there were reasons to suppose that the education of books would always prove a failure with little Gustavus. Yet Manuel earnestly advised him to go to school. "To try to make your way in the world with no learning in your head, it is like sailor that go to sea with nothing to steer by," he said.

"'Twould be kind of a joke on you if Manny should go to school now, wouldn't it?" Ludovico said to Gustavus. "And if he should go away from Scauset, you don't expect he would take you with him, do you? I guess he'd look out that you didn't go tagging after him as you did before."

Ludovico was lame, and he hardly saw how he was to find "a breathing chance" in the

world, and that made him cross sometimes. And brotherly frankness is not always the most agreeable thing in the world. Gustavus's heart burned within him at these dreadful words of his brother Ludovico.

He dropped his axe; he and Ludovico were chopping wood in their wood-shed, and it was about that time in the afternoon when a boy who has chopped all day feels that life is hard enough without any such candid remarks from his big brother. Gustavus dropped his axe and ran as fast as he could to the weather-beaten house on the Point.

Manuel was not at home. Caddy Doane said that she had sent him to the store, and after he had accepted one of Caddy's doughnuts and scowled at Anita, with the baby in her lap, because she was Emilio Fereda's sister, and Emilio had run away with the bear, Gustavus ran on to the store.

Now the post-office was in the store, and as Gustavus reached it, Manuel was coming out with a letter in his hand, and as he read this letter he allowed the sugar to trickle out of the great paper bag under his arm.

And when he saw it, Gustavus knew that

there was some very important news in that letter. He took the paper bag from Manuel, and carried it so that the sugar would not run out, and did not say a single word until Manuel had finished reading his letter, which was certainly the part of a faithful friend. Manuel looked up from the letter with his peaked, tawny face all aglow.

"I had thought to go to school to Mr. Dence," he said, with a slight touch of regret in his tone. "Although I am almost nineteen, and my legs grow long under the small desks, and Sissy Baker, with her hair in pigtail, she spell me down, yet I had meant to go, for it is better to be laughed at for what you do not know in the small school than in the great world! But now I go sailing-master again—sailing-master of a fine new yacht, as big by two times as the other! Mr. Carmichael think of it when I see him in New York, but his plans are not ready—he is not sure. We go in the fine new yacht to Southern waters—perhaps to Havana, to Santiago, to Manila, even to the Azores! Though I am Yankee, as good as any on Cape Cod, yet my heart it draw me there!"

Little Gustavus pricked up his ears at the sound of those names, made familiar by the reports of the war with Spain.

Many a Cape Cod boy had seen those places. The little Portergee had found at that time that he was all Yankee, and yearned to go. Now it was Manuel's turn to rescue the sugar, for a great stream was running out upon the snowy road!

Manuel patched up the paper bag and tied it up, while Gustavus turned his head away to hide as wretched and despairing a face as he had ever turned to the wintry waters that were always luring him away from Cape Cod.

Ludovico was right! Gustavus had never read about the unhappiness of the man who hangs on prince's favors, but he felt, with a cruel pang, that Manuel was becoming far too great a man for him to hope to be his friend. He was going away on this cruise to places whose very names stirred a longing in his heart, and he had not a thought for any one but himself!

"To go to school and to help Asher Baker with his knitting machine, that is what I meant; and they will grieve at home to have me go.

But it will be much money that I bring home; the anxious bump of Cap'n 'Siah I smooth him out. Young Josiah he go some day to college. Little Israel shall, I hope, be captain of a Cunarder, though now he think he desire only to ride the elephant in a circus," said Manuel, with an indulgent smile at little Israel's childishness. "Almost any Cape Cod boy he have it in him to be captain of a Cunarder," added Manuel, with enthusiasm.

"Llewellyn Briggs, of Fleetwell, that run away to sea when he was a boy, b'longs to a show," remarked Gustavus, in an aggrieved and sullen tone. "It's a big show, and 'twas going South this winter, but it got stranded—that means the money gave out—up to Rockton. The folks are all there, and the animals, too, in a great big kind of a stable they've built. Llewellyn he takes care of the animals and trains 'em. He lived here in Scauset one time, and he couldn't spell any better'n I can! But its orfle hard to begin to be a great man—when you hain't got any friends to help you—but a bear."

Manuel laid his hand affectionately on Gustavus' small, sturdy shoulder. But Gustavus

still kept his face turned toward the wintry sea to hide the briny drops in his eyes, which one cannot allow even one's heart's friend to behold.

"Cape Cod boy he find friends everywhere," said Manuel, consolingly. "On board the yacht and in my beautiful islands you will find many, for you are Cape Cod boy, and my friend. Of course I make him all right in New York when Mr. Carmichael talk about it first! And they will let you go. You will not need to run away; for it is as sailing-master's assistant, with good wages, that you go! For I have said to Mr. Carmichael that Cape Cod boy it is born in him, like Portuguese, to sail a ship. And I go not unless my heart's friend, Gustavus Nickerson he go too."

Gustavus did not throw himself into Manuel's arms, as he would have done if he had been another little Portergee. He gave vent to his overcharged feelings in the only way that was possible to him—by turning a somersault on the snowy, hubbly road.

And Manuel understood all that the somersault meant, and was quite satisfied. There was grief in the little house at the Point, but Cap'n

'Siah consoled himself somewhat by thinking, and saying with a grand air, that they could not expect that Scauset would be quite big enough for Manny nowadays.

Gustavus Nickerson's mother laughed incredulously, and then wiped her eyes. Little Gustavus, not yet fifteen, assistant to the sailing-master of a yacht! She thought with regret of the switch that had hung up behind the wood-shed door. Gustavus was anxious lest his bear should be lonesome in the wood-shed chamber at Cap'n 'Siah's, for there was such a prejudice against bears in Scauset that he had to be confined there most of the time. Manuel and Gustavus gave him much of their society, but it certainly would be very dull for Mézul in the wood-shed chamber when they were gone.

Gustavus had a bright idea. He wrote to his old friend, Llewellyn Briggs, now Signor Brignosi, of the "Grand Educational Menagerie and Panorama," and Llewellyn replied that he would be glad to take care of the bear for the winter, if he were really the great Mézul, with the agreement that he should appear at a certain number of his company's performances in the spring.

Llewellyn hinted that this might lead to a permanent engagement for the bear, and Gustavus' heart thrilled with an unconfessed hope that it might mean an engagement for him also.

He did not confess this hope, because Manuel did not seem to have a very high opinion of the show business. He thought that a fellow ought to do great things for Scauset, or something to "make himself a man," as he said. And the sea was always "the road of the bold" to Manuel.

But Gustavus wrote with enthusiasm and unmentionable spelling to Signor Brignosi, saying that he would bring the bear to him at Rockton on his way to Boston to sail in the yacht; and he added, in a postscript, that he felt within himself a talent for taming lions and "edgeucateing bares."

When the day of departure arrived the two boys arose very early to take the four-o'clock train up from the Cape.

Scarcely a mouthful of the nice hot breakfast that Caddy had prepared could either of them eat. Manuel thought it as well that the leave-takings should be hurried, for Cap'n 'Siah was old and feeble now to bear the strain of parting,

and Anita, who was Portuguese, wept aloud as a Cape Cod girl does not permit herself to do.

The bear, sleepy and reluctant, had to be dragged down the wood-shed stairs, and actually growled at Caddy's doughnuts, of which Gustavus carried a bagful, as there was no time to give Mézul any other breakfast.

"I never knew Mézul to object to make a journey before," said Manuel, wonderingly. "And he delight himself, other times, in the good doughnuts of Caddy."

"It's orfle early, and I s'pose a bear has his feelings," said Gustavus, with a sympathetic yawn. "I 'most wish 't we'd taken a lantern," he added, for it was still very dark, as they plunged into the Fleetwell road—they were obliged to walk to Fleetwell, where they were to take the train, as they could find no conveyance for the bear.

The stars blinked frostily in the far-off winter sky, and Scauset was still soundly sleeping. No, one person was stirring; a short, thick-set figure appeared from the Striped Marsh road.

"Mr. Dence?" called Manuel, for he thought it would be like the schoolmaster to come to say good-by to them.

But instead of answering, the figure took to its heels.

Manuel's sharp eyes peered into the darkness.

"It look—the size and the way he run—like Emilio," he said.

And Gustavus echoed "Emilio!" in a tone of conviction.

"If he's come back, it isn't for any good," he added, seriously. "But, anyhow, we've got the bear!" And Gustavus threw his arm around the great beast's neck as they walked.

The bear growled a little.

"It's hard for an old bear to be dragged out so early," said Gustavus, apologetically, when Manuel expressed his surprise—for Mézul had never before growled at his friends. The train stopped but a minute or two at the Fleetwell station in the frosty darkness. They were forced to hustle the bear into the baggage-car with their trunks. It was cold, but the baggage-master was kind, and gave them an old overcoat to cover him.

The two boys went into the smoking-car adjoining, where there was then no one but themselves; and both were aroused from a sound

sleep by the banging of doors and the conductor's shout of "Rockton!"

It was not yet seven o'clock, and was still dark in the cloudy winter morning. Signor Brignosi was at the station, as he had promised to be. He was dressed in ordinary, somewhat shabby clothes, and he was, as Gustavus said to himself with some disappointment, only Llewellyn Briggs, just as he used to be.

The boys both talked together in their eager haste to tell Llewellyn what a wonderful bear Mézul was, and just how he should be cared for. The train rushed off again so soon that Gustavus still shouted charges from the platform when he was beyond Llewellyn's hearing. He had not trusted himself to take leave of the bear, that was still cross and sleepy.

At half-past two o'clock that afternoon the fine new yacht was almost ready to sail. Gustavus, in a new suit almost as handsome as Manuel's, and a gold-lettered cap, was trying to answer, without blushing, the nautical questions of Miss Stella Carmichael, aged sixteen, who was all over the yacht, so wrapped in furs that nothing human was visible except a pair of pink cheeks and a pair of bright eyes.

Gustavus might be weak grammatically, but he knew the ropes. And he said to himself that he was not afraid of a girl; not he! although he knew that he was blushing furiously, and felt as if her bright eyes were turning him into a jelly-fish. Gustavus did not like girls, but one is not going to allow his satisfaction in sailing as an officer of a yacht to be affected by a trifle like that! An officer! Yes, sir; Manuel said so!

And in his pride and delight he had almost stifled the pang that he had felt ever since he had left Mézul to the care of the trainer, when a strange and unexpected thing happened.

A man in torn and soiled clothes, and with a handkerchief bound around his head, came limping hurriedly down the wharf. Signor Brig— No, you would not believe he could ever be anybody but Llewellyn Briggs!

"Talk about your bear!" he cried, as soon as he caught sight of Gustavus. "The great Mézul, do you call him? He's a young, green bear and as savage as a wolf! He has torn me most to pieces, and if anybody can train him, I don't want the job! If you don't get him away I shall have to put a bullet into him!"

A bullet into Mézul! Even Manuel's dark face turned white.

"Mézul never hurt anybody in the world—never!" cried Gustavus, angrily.

"Mézul!" repeated Llewellyn Briggs, scornfully. "I tell you he is a young bear that has never been trained."

"'There is always bear in bear,'" quoted Mr. Carmichael. "Bring him on board, boys, and let us hear what he has to say."

Llewellyn told a tale of fierce encounter with the bear, and his clothes bore witness to his truth-telling, as well as his bandaged head.

Manuel listened, with the line deepening between his brows.

"Emilio!" he murmured. "Emilio!"

But Gustavus could not see what Emilio could have to do with it. He turned to go downstairs and change his handsome uniform for the clothes that would make him again only a common Scauset boy.

"I must go back and take care of Mézul," he said, in a voice that he kept steady, though it had a sob in it. "Him and me are friends. We took care of each other in the woods.

"You will give up such a fine cruise for a

bear?" exclaimed Mr. Carmichael, with a wondering laugh. "Tell him better, Manuel."

But Manuel shook his head, firmly.

"It is strange thing," he said. "Something must have been done to Mézul to make him savage like that. Now I remember he growl this morning, not like himself. If Gustavus did not stay, I must. Mézul is not common bear."

Llewellyn said he should think not, and put his hand to his bandaged head ruefully. He added that if he had a chance to go as a sailor again, he would prefer it to training bears. And Manuel's mind was not so bent upon the bear but that he could say a good word for Llewellyn to Mr. Carmichael, who at once engaged him on condition that he should be ready in an hour. One of the crew that he had engaged was missing, so Llewellyn's arrival was opportune.

As Llewellyn hurried off to make his preparations, other unexpected visitors were seen making their way along the pier toward the yacht—Anita, with the baby in her arms, and dragging along on one side of her, Mézul, the great bear, on the other side her reluctant brother, Emilio.

"It is only trick, bad trick of Emilio!" she cried, frantically, from the gang-plank, "but he say he mean no harm. He change Mézul in the wood-shed chamber for a young bear that my father buy. He come to Scauset to make me go on the street with tambourine and bear again. My father can train young bear, but he will hurt somebody else, I fear, so I run away when I find Emilio in the road and hear what he have done. I must bring Mézul to you, and I have not time to take the baby home. Oh, if Mézul were not angel bear I could not have got here! And Emilio he only want to know where is his bear."

Emilio was struggling, as if he did not really care even to wait for that information.

"It's in Rockton, at the show," called Manuel, "and if he do not get himself out—"

"Oh, bring the delightful bear on board!" cried Stella Carmichael, impulsively, "and the girl and the baby. They look so cold."

Mézul insisted upon licking the faces of his friends, and took fancy steps upon the deck, to the great delight of every one on board the yacht, especially of the owner's daughter.

"We deserve not to see Mézul again," said

Manuel, with feeling, "when we could be deceived by a stupid, common bear!"

"It was so orfle dark and we were so sleepy—and whoever would have thought of such a thing? Nobody in the world but that rascal Emilio would have dared to do it! He meant to get away with Mézul after he had been paid for him!"

"He would have if it had not been for Anita," said Manuel.

"Yes, sir, if it had not been for Anita!" said Gustavus, and the boys looked at each other—a look that meant they must not forget Anita.

But at that very moment some one else was looking out for Anita. The young mistress of the yacht had warmed and comforted her in the cabin, and Anita had confided to her that the longing of her heart was to get to her grandmother in the Azores, so that she need never again go on the streets with a performing bear, nor have her baby sister brought up to such a life.

Now did it not seem providential that they were going to the Azores in that yacht! That was the question that Stella asked her father behind the cabin door. And would it not be de-

lightful to have both a bear and a baby on board?—so lively! And if, as he said, the cruise was intended to restore her health—for it seemed the pink cheeks had only a little while before been pale—why, such lovely company would be sure to do it!

And although papa Carmichael shrugged his shoulders and frowned and said it was ridiculous, the result of the private conference was that he yielded—as is apt to be the way with fathers.

A telegram was dispatched to the little house at the Point, that there might be no anxiety about Anita and the baby. Stella was sure that with the help of the stewardess and her maid the deficiencies in Anita's wardrobe and the baby's could all be supplied.

Gustavus was restored to his uniform, and Llewellyn Briggs was given a position that he felt suited his talents better than bear-taming.

And only an hour and a half late, after all, the Alfarata sailed away with a favoring wind, Anita weeping tears of joy that she was going to the Azores, and tears of grief that she was leaving Scauset, and Mézul stepping around jovially to the strains of the darky cook's banjo.

"Me 'n' you will always stick together, won't we, Manny?" said Gustavus, under cover of the music. "Me 'n' you and the bear—and Anita and the baby," he added with a sudden noble enlargement of heart.

CHAPTER XV

THE CRUISE OF THE ALFARATA

The Alfarata was a large schooner-yacht, with a carefully picked crew, Manuel was sailing-master, and Gustavus was called "Mate Nickerson" by both crew and passengers before they had been two days out!

Gustavus actually felt himself grow taller every time he heard it. He only wished he could measure himself now by the notch upon the wood-shed door—the notch that had seemed to move upward so that one never could get above it.

There was a Scauset young man among the sailors also, although Gustavus did not know it until the yacht had set sail. It was Jo Fretas, who had been with Manuel on many trips in the Delight, and it was Manuel who had secured a place for him on the Alfarata.

Jo was a good sailor; since he was a Cape

Cod Portuguese, that goes without saying, and the rest of the crew had been selected by the sailing-master, who thought he could discern good seamanship in the looks of a man. So the Alfarata's passengers went to sea with that comfortable sense of security bestowed by a staunch ship and a trustworthy crew.

Miss Pym, Stella's governess, had felt some objections to the bear, as well as to Anita and the baby, but as Gustavus proudly said, the bear had such "an orfle winning way" that scarcely anyone could resist him. It was not long before Mézul was listening in the cabin to the strains of Stella's grand piano, and on the lower deck to the cook's banjoing or Jo Fretas' fiddling, with perfect impartiality. And he performed a new and amusing trick almost every day. Llewellyn Briggs declared that, as sick as he was of the show business, the sight of such a talented bear as that almost made him long to return to it. He said that he should live in hopes of "starring it" once with Mézul.

Out from under the cold, low-lying Northern sky sailed the Alfarata, and bleak winds grew balmy, and sun rays that had seemed but lances

of the frost had now a glow that warmed one to the heart. The bear curled himself up upon the deck like a kitten, and the baby rolled and tumbled over him fearlessly. Sometimes Mézul would lift her in his great paws and shake her gently, while she shouted with glee. And although Miss Pym had shuddered at first, she grew to enjoy the antics of the frolicsome pair. And Stella, for whose health the voyage had been undertaken, grew so gay and rosy that her ill health seemed only a jest.

And Anita, with the color growing bright in her tawny cheeks, longed—actually longed for a tambourine, the thing which she had hated most in the world.

"When the heart is light, tambourine grow light and play himself," she said.

The storms were but slight, the winds were mostly favoring. As they neared the Azores it seemed as if they were sailing endlessly upon a summer sea; but there is always danger for those who go down to the sea in ships. And such a calm as they were enjoying is very apt to be followed by a great storm. The sailing-master knew this, and kept watch constantly, with a sharp little frown between his brows;

the sailors knew it—even Jo Fretas, whose mind seemed centred upon his fiddle.

The storm came on the very day when they had sighted land—a low-lying, dark blue line upon the horizon, toward which Anita's eyes and many of the sailors' were strained with tearful longing; "the faeriest of faery lands, the land of home."

Manuel himself had a lump in his throat; but sailing-masters must not let such things be known. Moreover, he had espied something upon the horizon besides that low, dark blue line.

The storm had but a small beginning; Anita insisted upon staying on deck, watching the blue line that meant home, until the darkness of night swallowed it up; and when she went below, the briny drops upon her cheeks were chiefly from her eyes. One of the unpleasant mysteries about girls, to Gustavus Nickerson's mind, was that they cried when they were happy.

The wind grew suddenly cold—a sighing wind that brought sleet. At midnight the storm seemed less severe than had been feared. The sailing-master's brow had cleared, although

the churning sea dashed foam into his face, and the night was so thick that the fog-horn's shrill blasts were never stilled. An answering blast came now and then out of the darkness, at a secure distance. Manuel thought of another night of storm and darkness, on board the Delight, when lights had suddenly appeared, directly ahead of her on shore.

A sudden light now! But a huge shape, blacker than the darkness, loomed behind it, and a steamer's shrill whistle pierced his ears—too late! There was no time for any manœuvre that could help before the huge shape struck the slender Alfarata a shivering, rending blow, and went swiftly screaming on, as if unconscious of the ruin she had wrought!

It was not certain at first that it was ruin, the Alfarata was so stanchly built. In smooth waters Manuel thought, she might have struggled to port, but in that tempestuous sea he knew, soon, that she could not last long.

The order to lower the lifeboats was given quietly, and there was no panic. Miss Pym screamed only twice, and Stella not at all. Anita besought every one to take the baby to her grandmother in Fayal if she should be lost, and

Gustavus whispered, hoarsely, to Manuel, even while they were lowering the first boat, "The bear!"

For Mézul was too large and unwieldly for the crowded boats, and a dreadful fear had seized Gustavus. Manuel was fond of him, he knew, but he had always doubted a little the depth of Manuel's regard for the bear. And he knew that this disaster would be very likely to make the sailors think that the bear was an unlucky passenger. They were full of superstitious notions, as sailors are apt to be, and some of them had always looked askance at the bear. They might think—even Manuel might think—that Mézul must be left to go down with the yacht.

"I'm goin' when Mézul goes!" he said, huskily but firmly, while he did good service in helping to lower the boats.

"The raft! Last of all—you and I and the bear," answered Manuel, quietly.

The raft! Gustavus had not thought that any one would trust himself to that; it was small—and in such a sea!

"I think of him much; there is no other way," said Manuel, in answer to Gustavus' exclamation.

Mr. Carmichael had gone, with his daughter, in the first boat, at Stella's urgent entreaty, and with Manuel's assurance that he could do no good by remaining, the sailors being orderly and under control. Llewellyn Briggs and Jo Fretas had lowered Anita and the baby, with Miss Pym, the stewardess, and Stella's maid into the next boat, and were putting off, when back through the darkness came Anita's voice:

"Manuel Silva, your box, I take him safe with me!"

"What's that girl hollerin' about a box for?" said Gustavus, surlily; for there was a pang at his heart, even in the terror and excitement of the moment. She knew something about that mysterious box of Manuel's that Manuel had never told him, although they occupied the same quarters, and he knew that Manuel never turned in without carefully inspecting the box that was tucked away under his bunk. Anita evidently knew that it was precious; it was probable that she knew what was in it. He had confided in that Portuguese girl as he had not confided in his heart's friend!

"My box I keep him with me on the raft!" shouted Manuel, after a moment's hesitation.

"It is heavy for the boat, with so many in it," he added to Gustavus. "But she is good girl, Anita, to think of it. I pray in my heart that she and the baby come safely to the grandmother!"

"You'd better be prayin' for you 'n' me 'n' the bear," muttered Gustavus; for, although Anita had done him a very good turn in restoring the bear, yet it rankled that she knew about that box.

Of course this was but a fleeting impression upon Gustavus' mind; the night's business was too heavy and too urgent to allow one to harbor small injuries.

When all were gone, for Manuel would be the last to leave, they lowered the bear to the raft. If Mézul had not been docile, if he "hadn't known more'n some folks," as Gustavus said, this would have been impossible to the two boys. As it was, it was very difficult. The sea broke over the Alfarata in tumbling billows; she strained and lurched—she shuddered like some living thing in agony as she went down. And the raft, with its living freight, had but just pushed off; it seemed likely to be sucked into the gulf that yawned

as the yacht went down. Manuel and Gustavus clung to each other, and both clung to the bear, that whined and howled above the noise of the wind and storm.

The sea had closed over the stanchly-built vessel, and the little raft rode the billows as yet safely, but seeming likely to be swamped at any moment.

At first Manuel seemed scarcely to think of their personal safety.

"When one who sail vessel see him go down, Heaven only know how he feel!" he said, solemnly.

"But no one has gone down with it! And the bear hasn't—or the box." (Manuel had taken off his coat and wrapped it around the precious box.) "And it can't be long before morning, and we ain't far from land. If we can live till light we shall be picked up." Gustavus said this hopefully. He could hope, since he had not been obliged to abandon Mézul.

When one has a raft under his feet, two good friends beside him—even if one is only a bear—and a plucky Yankee heart, all is not lost.

"Every boat is new, best kind, and the raft," said Manuel, with quiet satisfaction. "If the

wind rise him no higher—" And Manuel knelt on the wet and plunging raft and said a little prayer, simply and manfully. Gustavus turned away his head and inwardly murmured, "Now I lay me," getting it mixed queerly enough with a piece he had spoken at school about a boy who held the bridge in the brave days of old.

They had one cruel fright; a steamer's raucous whistle rent the air, and it was close upon them; but it passed them by; they rode mountain-high in its wake, but were not submerged.

A streaked blue-green dawn struggled through mist, but there was no longer rain or sleet; yet they could not see the dark blue line that meant land.

"But we are not far from land; we cannot have drift far; we keep up the good heart!" said Manuel. And almost at that moment a vessel came in sight, evidently bearing down upon them.

There were many people on her deck, and signals were made to the voyagers on the raft.

"They have pick up our people!" cried Manuel, with a thankful sob in his throat, as the vessel drew near. "I see them all!—no,

not all, but I think that all are there. If no one drown I feel me no pain."

"But you look orfle pale! What makes you look so orfle pale?" exclaimed Gustavus, scanning Manuel's face in the dim light of the dawn.

But Manuel was answering a shout from the vessel, and did not heed the question. The vessel was the Norma, bound for an American port. When she was near enough to fling a rope, there was a hesitation and a parleying. The boys understood from the shouts and signals of Mr. Carmichael and the captain that the vessel had a heavy cargo of fruit; that she was crowded, and the captain and sailors were superstitious. They would not take the bear.

It was evident that Mr. Carmichael was expostulating earnestly, indignantly, with the captain, but in vain.

"Portuguese sailor, and afraid of bear!" exclaimed Manuel, wonderingly. "Portuguese, and leave poor animal to perish!"

"There ain't a Cape Codder 'mongst that crew, you'd better b'lieve!" cried Gustavus, hotly. "Some Portergese—well, you 'n' I know what Emilio Fereda is!" And then Gustavus

was suddenly afraid that he had wounded the feelings of his heart's friend. "There ain't many like you, Manny, 'mongst any kind of folks." He laid his hand on Manuel's shoulder, but Manuel shook it off with a groan. "Why, Manny, you ain't hurt?" he cried.

A rope came flying through the air and fell at the boys' feet.

The ship was within speaking-distance now, and Manuel called, firmly,

"We come not without the bear!"

"You'll have to, these fellows are such simpletons!" replied Mr. Carmichael. "There is no begging or hiring them! But it is a question of your lives, and you must not hesitate!"

"You—you go, Manuel; he ain't your bear! I'll stick by him," said Gustavus, manfully.

Manuel looked about him, over the empty waste of waters, and toward that point of the horizon where the blue line of land had disappeared. Then he seized the rope and flung it disdainfully back toward the ship. And to all expostulations and entreaties from the ship he shook his head firmly.

"We come not without the bear! Never fear, we shall be pick up!" he cried. "He go on

towards America," he said, as at length the vessel set sail again. "I know; he fear his fruit will spoil, and he will not go back to the Azores. Mr. Carmichael cannot hire him. The wind it blow wrong; that is why we no longer see the land."

Gustavus had a revulsion of feeling, now that his fear for the bear's safety was gone, and homesick tears welled in his eyes as he watched the lessening homeward-bound sails. A low moan came from Manuel, and he slipped down senseless upon the raft at Gustavus' feet.

Then little Gustavus went wild, and waved and screamed frantically after the departing vessel.

"You've left him here to die!" he shouted. "Come back; I'll go! What's a bear compared to Manuel?"

But Manuel opened his eyes and murmured, faintly; "It is not the heart that fail me, little Gustavus; it is the arm! When we lower the bear to the raft the chain become twist around my arm and break him!"

"'N—'n' you never said a word!" Gustavus forgot that he had been Mate Nickerson and

burst into tears as he gazed at Manuel's left arm, which lay limp beside him.

"'Sh! See!" said Manuel, raising his other arm and pointing across the water.

"A ship!" cried Gustavus. "And it is a steamer!"—as a faint shrill scream came to their ears. "A steamer's crew will know better than to be afraid of a bear," he added, joyfully.

Their joy was increased when, as the little steamer came near, in response to their signals, they saw Llewellyn Briggs, Jo Fretas, and Anita and the baby upon the deck. They had been rescued from their boat an hour before, but Anita had refused to go below until she was assured of the safety of the Alfarata's crew and passengers.

In a few hours they were at Ponta Delgada, whither the little fruit steamer was bound, and were kindly cared for by Manuel's warm-hearted countrymen. Bears were not objected to at the little Portuguese inn, near the water's edge, where the shipwrecked sailors had found refuge; on the contrary, Mézul was treated like an honored guest. Nevertheless, Gustavus had a grievance that made his heart sore.

It was to Anita that Manuel had confided the

mysterious box when he found himself so feeble from the pain in his broken arm that he had to be carried from the steamer to the hotel.

Anita had carried that box herself, although it was almost as large as she was and very heavy, letting Llewellyn Briggs carry the baby. And when Manuel was taken to the hospital to have his arm set Anita carried the box there, and persuaded the authorities to allow Manuel to have it under his bed.

And the only explanation that Manuel gave of this strange proceeding was that Gustavus had so much to do to take care of him and the bear that he feared he would forget the box.

He trusted that girl more than he trusted him —Gustavus! It was probable that she knew what was in the box; perhaps even Llewellyn Briggs knew! Gustavus disdained to ask whether they knew, but he listened eagerly to Anita's conversation, and one day, when he heard Llewellyn mention the box, he pricked up his ears.

"What's Manuel got in that box that it's so mighty precious?" asked Llewellyn Briggs, curiously.

Anita shook her head.

"He never tell me, and I never ask. He is my friend, and I guard it for him with my heart's blood!" And Anita laid her little lean, brown hand dramatically on her dingy calico bosom.

Gustavus suddenly seized the little lean, brown hand in his sturdy Yankee fist and shook it heartily.

"You're an orfle square girl, Anita Fereda, 'n' I'm sorry that ever I didn't like you!" he said.

But this burst of feeling did not prevent Gustavus from writing as follows in his first letter home:

"We hain't got hardly any Money nor hardly any cloes and Manny's arm is broke in 3 plaices, but hees got Sumthing in a Box that i think hees going to make a Fortune with you can't Down Manny so but what he Bobs rite Up again Same as he sold the litle hering for Sardeens. this is speled so well becos Manny is lurning me.

"P. s. mee and L. Briggs was going into the Sho bisness togather but her granmother is ded and hee maried Anita and the Baby. it is kweer that hee would mary a gurl when hee has ben in so many Circuses but i will stand By him for hee never need a frend more than now."

CHAPTER XVI

MANUEL'S MYSTERIOUS BOX

THE little Portergee lay in a hospital, in an Azorean port, and felt himself to be as much a Cape Cod Yankee as a Portergee, so persistently did his thoughts and his heart turn back to Scauset, his adopted home; that is, when the pain in his arm would not permit his mind to dwell upon business.

There was "never a scrape without a way out of him," he had assured his heart's friend, Gustavus Nickerson, and Gustavus thought that Manuel's way out of this scrape was in the mysterious box which he had persuaded the doctor to allow him to keep under his cot. Gustavus thought that things were discouraging.

Manuel's heart, too, was sore at the loss of the Alfarata, of which he had been sailing-master. At home in Scauset they didn't think much of "Portergees," and were always warning Cap'n

'Siah Doane that he would live to repent of adopting Manuel. They had also said that it was foolhardy for Mr. Carmichael, the owner of the yacht, to engage the little Portergee, who was not yet nineteen, as sailing-master. And the yacht had gone down! It was the result of a collision that could not have been avoided by any skill in the management of the Alfarata, yet it was no wonder that the sailing-master took the matter to heart.

Manuel disliked to draw upon the little pile of savings he had left behind him with Cap'n 'Siah to keep the family through the hard winter. In fact, there was not likely to be much of it left, for winters were apt to be very hard in Scauset, and there were many mouths to feed in the little house on Porcupine Point, to which Manuel's thoughts continually turned.

By this time Cap'n Seba Oakes was reminding dear old Cap'n 'Siah that it "was resky business adoptin' little Portergees," and even trying to make him believe that Manuel would be obliged to pay damages for wrecking the Alfarata, or at least would be debarred from ever acting as sailing-master again.

And Manuel had a dreadful dream, in which

he saw Cap'n 'Siah's wen growing and growing, and Cap'n 'Siah himself dwindling and dwindling, until the wen was all there was of him!

When he awoke from that dream he showed a weakness which made Gustavus Nickerson open his eyes; he wanted to have the mysterious box, which he was allowed to keep under his bed, taken out and placed where he could see it.

Now Gustavus Nickerson's feelings had been sorely wounded by Manuel's persistent reticence concerning the contents of that box.

On board the Alfarata Manuel had kept it under his bunk, and looked every night to see that it was safe.

And although he had not saved his clothes when the yacht was wrecked, he had saved that box! And he had taken off his jacket to wrap around it when the waves broke over the raft.

Gustavus scorned to asked a question concerning the box, but he thought that when one carried about with him anything so precious and so mysterious, one should confide in his heart's friend.

He had suspected at one time that Anita had been told what was in the box, for she had been

trusted to carry it from the steamer to the landing, but Anita had disclaimed any knowledge of the mystery. She owned to having had a trembling fear when she carried the box that it contained fire-arms. Anita was not afraid of shipwrecks or wild beasts, she said with feeling, but she did not like things that would go off, which was just like Gustavus' sister Viola.

When Gustavus repeated that to Manuel, as a little hint that they would like to know what was in the box, Manuel laughed and said,

"When what is in that box go off, I hope he make a noise!" Then the little frown between his brows deepened as he added, "But I wish Portuguese he do not like so well to go barefeeted!"

Now what could that mean? That the box contained an explosive that would "go off" on the ground, or snakes that would be dangerous to barefooted Azoreans? Gustavus had not thought that there was any living thing in the box, for he had examined it very carefully without discovering the slightest breathing-space; but he remembered that his brother Ludovico had told him that there were torpid creatures that hibernated as if they were dead, and in-

stinctively he drew his feet up under him one day as he sat on a curious little woven stool by Manuel's cot in the hospital, with the box close beside him, sturdily shod in Yankee shoes and blue-yarn stockings though the feet were.

Then his heart suddenly thrilled with the hope that there might be snakes, educated snakes, for a show, in the box.

If only Manuel had been brought to see the advantages of the show business! Gustavus suddenly flung his pride to the winds and asked a leading question.

"Are they educated or will they bite?" with a jerk of his head towards the box.

Manuel tried to raise himself, forgetting the framework in which his broken arm lay, and which would not let him move.

"Listen and I will tell you what is in the box," he said.

At that instant, while Gustavus started forward so eagerly that his tow-colored hair seemed to stand upright and his eyes to become as round as o's, a strain of music came through the open window to their ears—a strangely familiar strain, "Tommy, make way for your uncle,"—brassy, rollicking. Where had they heard it before?

Gustavus looked out of the window. The hospital was very near the water. A large steamer, evidently partially disabled, was being towed to an anchorage by two vessels.

"The circus steamer! Yes, sir! Just as sure's you live!" he shouted, and rushed to the door. He had forgotten the box.

He had also forgotten his heart's friend; but on the threshold he turned back: "You've got to come, Manny! You can't stay there when it's that steamer that came near carrying us off to Europe. It's those folks that offered a reward for Mézul, and said our bear wasn't Mézul! They can't claim him now, can they?"

"I think they will not pay the thousand dollars reward they have offered; he is now so old, poor Mézul!" answered Manuel. "Go, my heart's friend, and do not mind me. But if you see the good Captain Lopez, ask him to come to see me."

Captain Lopez was the ship-master with whom Manuel had made his first voyage; he had retired now with a comfortable fortune. He had remembered Manuel, and had greeted him with warm-hearted Portuguese embraces and joyful tears. He had been to see him several times at

the hospital, and Gustavus cherished a suspicion that Captain Lopez knew what there was in the box.

The hospital was almost deserted; even the gentle white-coifed nurse who was Manuel's attendant had slipped out to listen to the music.

A sailor with a cut across his face raised his head from a cot near to Manuel's.

"When there is a circus in this town mischief breaks loose!" he said in Portuguese. And Manuel looked anxiously at his box and wished that he could push it under his cot.

The rollicking strains of music drew nearer, and joyous shouts were mingled with them. The light-hearted, lazy little Portuguese town seized eagerly upon any pretext for a holiday.

The sailor drew himself up painfully and looked out of the window; he said that for his part he thought nothing of circuses.

The steamer must be badly disabled, for they were landing the animals; the strange, wild, half-human cries came clearly to Manuel's ears, the hyena's laughter ringing above all the rest.

Manuel's mind reverted to that night when he and Gustavus had been carried out of New

York Harbor on board that very steamer—only last Christmas, but how long ago it seemed! He knew that the circus company returned each spring for a summer in the States, and it was natural that the steamer should put into the Azores for repairs, yet it seemed a queer happening that he and Gustavus should be there to meet it. He wondered if Gustavus would not be tempted to prove to them that the bear was really the great Mézul—and claim the reward of a thousand dollars.

An hour passed and Gustavus had not returned; but that was not strange; neither had the nurse, although she was as dutiful as she was gentle. It was not every day in the year that the greatest circus in the world appeared in a sleepy little Portuguese port.

There was a sudden commotion outside the door, and from the queer rough ambulance of the hospital a figure was brought in upon a mattress—a little, dark-skinned old man with a red skull-cap upon his bony head.

Manuel recognized him at once. It was old Giuseppe, the animal trainer of the circus, the one who had scornfully flouted the idea that Gustavus' bear was the great Mézul. He had

been very ill, Manuel heard the attendants say as they brought him in, but was now on the road to recovery.

He scolded, in broken English, all the way, after a fashion that reminded Manuel of the chattering squirrels in the Scauset woods. He was laid upon a cot at the end of the corridor, near to Manuel's—the hospital was not large—and he still continued to scold, rehearsing his pains and the injuries he had received from the rough transportation. Shortly after his arrival, Gustavus came hurrying in, only remembering when he had almost reached Manuel's cot to subdue his heavy shoes and his shrill tones to the requirements of the hospital, where indeed the discipline was lax to an extraordinary degree, as it is apt to be among easy-going Southern peoples.

"I've got Mézul here!" he said, triumphantly. "They let me put him in an old kind of a barn—I can't pronounce the name they call it—back of the great kitchen." The hospital was composed of many small buildings, some old, some new, and all separate. "It was that nice nurse that waits on you that made 'em let me. She likes a circus and she likes bears

—yessir! They had to unload that steamer; couldn't repair her without. They've got tents set up already; goin' to have a show to pay expenses. I've got compliment'ries." Gustavus drew tickets from his pocket. "Earned 'em helpin' with the animals. Rode the giraffe from the wharf to the tent; rode him—yessir! Shinned up him! They thought I'd be afraid, but I told 'em I owned a bear—"

"But it is more wise to say nothing," warned Manuel, who knew before this that Gustavus had an indiscreet tongue.

"They wouldn't think he was Mézul. I'm not afraid!" said Gustavus. "Besides, I shall keep him locked up—if Anita does want him to help take care of the baby."

"The bear is not lame now, and he has the gay heart again," said Manuel. "It is much more to be believe that he is Mézul now than when they have seen him."

"Two compliment'ries," repeated Gustavus, fingering his bits of pasteboard with a pleased smile. "And I've a good mind to ask the nurse to go with me. Would you darst?"

Manuel gently dissuaded his heart's friend from this piece of gallantry. He proposed as a

substitute for it that he should invite her to see Mézul perform his most remarkable tricks.

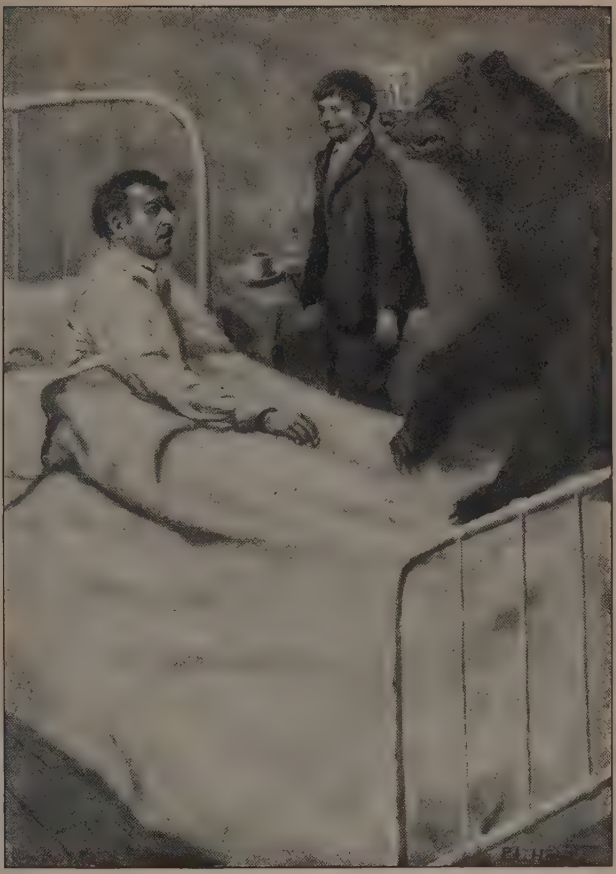
"But it must with caution be manage," added Manuel, in a whisper, "for—look there!" And he pointed towards the cot where the old trainer lay.

Gustavus stepped along on tiptoe and looked at the old man, who had now fallen asleep, but continued to mutter and grumble in his dreams, now in Italian, now in broken English.

"That old Gusippy! I looked for him on the wharf, but I didn't see him! He's askin' for water; he said 'water' two or three times just like anybody! And the nurse is lookin' after a woman with a sick baby that they're bringin' up from the steamer. I'm goin' to get somebody to carry him water, and don't you be scairt! I talked to the boss down to the steamer, 'n' he said they'd had enough of bears; they didn't want another one anyhow."

Gustavus went out in haste, and in a very short space of time along the corridor came the great bear, walking with dignity upon his hind legs, and carrying upon his nose a brimming glass of water!

This was the famous trick that Giuseppe



THE BEAR BENT FORWARD

had once declared only the great Mézul could do.

The old man opened his eyes and gazed at the bear. Gustavus, crouched at the foot of the cot, had given it a little shake to awaken him; one did not dare to whoop naturally in the hospital.

Giuseppe raised himself, gasping, upon his little, lean elbow. The bear bent forward so gently and so steadily that the water was not spilled! But when the old man had it in his hand it would have been spilled if Gustavus had not sprung to the rescue. He was trembling with excitement, and tears were running down his seamy cheeks.

"It is Mézul—the great Mézul!" he cried, in a shrill, high-pitched voice. "I train him myself! I know him in a thousand bears!" As Gustavus took the glass from his hand he grasped the bear's great paw. Mézul bent his head and licked the little trembling brown hand, and then the wrinkled face of the old trainer.

"There were boys last winter in New York—rascals of Americans—that tried to deceive me—me that have train the great Mézul myself! That have teach him so he win decorations all

over the world!" Suddenly the old man raised himself again, and narrowed his faded eyes to peer curiously at Gustavus. "How you come by the bear?" he demanded.

Gustavus was glad that the nurse came in at that moment, followed by a male nurse. The old man lay back upon his pillows, and began to rehearse his grievances, but when Gustavus placed the empty glass upon the bear's nose, and Mézul went out of the corridor with backward glances, Giuseppe chuckled and shouted bravo, and called for admiration from every beholder.

"Now see what you have do," said Manuel, severely. "He will make them claim the bear."

Gustavus thrust his fingers through his tow hair until it stood upright above his freckled forehead.

"I'm some smarter'n what I was," he said. "I guess I can manage."

And Manuel, looking after him as he walked away, murmured, almost sadly,

"He have outgrown himself, the little Gustavus."

Gustavus sat often by Giuseppe's bedside while Captain Lopez visited Manuel. The latter

two friends had much confidential discourse, and Gustavus was convinced that the Captain knew what was in the box. He confided to the old trainer that there was a secret about that box—Gustavus always did have an indiscreet tongue, but he had reason to believe that there were educated snakes in it—a great attraction for a show.

Manuel didn't seem to like the show business, but he was of the kind that if one thing fails, keep another to fall back upon.

Gustavus parried the old trainer's questions about the bear very neatly, but about the box he was confidential.

And it happened that when Giuseppe had been able for about a week to sit up, both he and the box were one evening found to be missing.

Manuel was then no longer obliged to lie in bed, and he was at the other side of the room, telling stories to the Portuguese sailor, while Gustavus was talking to the pleasant little nurse. And the old trainer took advantage of this state of things to draw the box out from under Manuel's cot, and to unfasten the door of Mézul's lodgings, and escape with both bear and box.

Manuel turned pale and trembled—the first time Gustavus had ever seen him do that.

They ran out of the house, Manuel almost unconscious of the pain that the jar of running gave to his arm, and not far away, from under the shadow of a yam-tree that arose stately in the moonlight, there came a sudden, sharp cry of pain.

"The knitting-machine! He open the box and the needles catch him. Oh, I hope he shall not spoil it! There is great fortune for the good Asher Baker, for me, for all! Captain Lopez he get for me Portuguese patent. I sell him outright. There is much money for Asher Baker. There is some for me. I go not penniless home to Scauset. No more stockings shall be import from Europe, from America; no more Portuguese shall be barefeet."

The old trainer's hand was badly lacerated. He had found the box very heavy, and had determined to see whether its contents were really valuable before carrying it farther.

Gustavus was not going to tell about the educated snakes—not just then, anyway—but in his wrath and pain Giuseppe revealed the confidential disclosure that Gustavus had made to him.

When a boy's heart's friend laughs at him, as Manuel laughed at Gustavus, perhaps a veil should be drawn over the boy's feelings.

"I should have told you what was in the box, only I fear the plan fail me to work him. Portuguese he love so well to be barefeet," explained Manuel, consolingly, with his arm around Gustavus' shouldar.

By that time old Giuseppe was again in his cot at the hospital, with his wounded hand bandaged and his disposition somewhat subdued by pain and penitence. And Mézul was standing on his hind legs beside the cot on which Manuel was sitting, begging for pardon by the wagging of his huge paws.

"I w'n't much afraid about the bear," said Gustavus, "because I—I've made a little arrangement with the comp'ny." Gustavus tried to dig his heel into the hospital floor in his embarrassment, as if it were the Scauset sand. He felt as if he ought to have asked Manuel's advice about this important arrangement, but that secrecy of Manuel's about the box had rankled in his mind. "They ain't goin' to try to claim the bear; they know he's pretty old, and I wouldn't let anybody have him—no, sir, not for

anything in this world." Gustavus put his arm around the bear's neck, and Mézul stopped begging and joyfully licked the boy's face.

"But they've offered Mézul an engagement—a starrin' tour of the States! Yessir! And I'm goin', too. Maybe I sha'n't like the show business, but since we lost that tunny I've known I should never be satisfied till I tried it. But—but I don't know how I shall stand it to go off with the comp'ny next week, if you're goin' to stay here."

"I go, too. Scauset I adopt him," said Manuel, firmly. "I build up great business in Scauset. Scauset he grow, and the wen of the good Cap'n 'Siah he disappear. And you and I, we be heart's friends always." Manuel seized him about the neck and embraced him fervently. Gustavus was responsive inwardly, but shamefaced outwardly, for those are not the ways of Cape Cod boys. He turned his head away, and performed again the act of burrowing into the Scauset sand. But the voice was gruff and broken in which he said:

"I've made 'em 'gree to have a show there. Scauset will see for once a stavin' old circus."

CHAPTER XVII

ANOTHER SCRAPE

HOMEWARD bound on the great circus steamer! A queer place it was, with much gayety and much grumbling, with the hyenas screaming loud enough to drown the band, while the bear quarreled with the old elephant about taking care of Anita's baby sister. There was an ourang-outang that wanted to take care of the baby, too, but Anita would not allow it. She wasn't really afraid, she said, having traveled with more than one show, and learned how much goodness and gentleness there sometimes is in animals that are called wild; but she wasn't very well acquainted with ourang-outangs.

The baby was very popular on board the steamer, where they were accustomed to almost everything that was good to pet and to make things lively except a baby; and Anita had her hands full to keep the baby safe and unspoiled.

The Fat Lady was especially fond of her, and Anita having her prejudices, as we are all likely to, did not like fat ladies.

She said they were seldom genuine; they were often made partly of India-rubber and blown up like balloons to look as if they were fat.

She didn't think that a person like that was altogether fit to hold the baby. The Fat Lady was very pleasant and smiling, but if you once begin to suspect that smiles are all India-rubber, why you can't like them any more; that was what Anita said.

But for the sake of being good-natured, as one naturally wished to be in such a very pleasant company, she did allow the Fat Lady, occasionally, to take the baby in her arms.

And from that good nature on Anita's part came new trouble to Manuel and Gustavus just when all their affairs seemed so happy and prosperous. Ups and downs are the way of the world; it sometimes seems as if mischance were waiting around every corner. It didn't need Cap'n Seba Oakes, who had been around the world and had a wooden leg, to tell the boys that.

"The stout heart, you must have him always,"

Manuel said privately to Gustavus, who had permitted himself to cry and to say that a fellow might as well stay at home and chop wood for the kitchen stove as to try to make a man of himself out in the world.

"But what is a fellow to do?" Gustavus had demanded, swallowing hard.

"What is right, when he have think up what he is! What is right and will bring him out of the scrape," answered Manuel, promptly.

In this scrape it was Manuel who was the chief sufferer, but Gustavus was his heart's friend, and he still thought of him as small and needing a protector.

Anita had allowed the Fat Lady to hold the baby. She sat on the deck in the sunshine with the baby on her knee. She was a year-and-a-half-old baby, now, although still very small, and she could say little words and pat people's cheeks and laugh bewitchingly.

The Fat Lady was called Madame Lollocopski, when any one really tried to pronounce her name. She preferred to have it shortened to Lollo, and the Skeleton Man, who was believed to be in love with her, always called her Lollo.

Every one liked her, and when she sang, in a voice as thin as she was fat, and almost always wheezy with a cold, no one would let her know that she did not sing beautifully.

She sang now to the baby, "Hush a bye, baby, upon the tree top," and the Skeleton Man, who was walking to and fro, clad in a fur overcoat, although the day was mild, because he could always feel the wind blow through his bones, laid his hand on his heart to show how the music affected him, and the sick kangaroo, whose head lay upon the folds of the Fat Lady's dress, whined a low accompaniment to the song.

All the invalids were on deck to-day, including old Giuseppe, the bear-trainer, and the ourang-outang that had taken such a fancy to the baby. He was a young ourang-outang, of a species that had never before been imported. He had lost flesh ever since he had been shipped at Liverpool, and he wailed and wept like a person in distress. The ship's doctor thought that he was only homesick, but that it was doubtful whether he would live. An ourang-outang was always a great risk, the keeper said, and the creature was most carefully fed and tended.

He sat, like a human creature, upon a coil of rope, his lean, hairy elbows upon his knees, and his chin resting upon his queer, skinny paws.

The Fat Lady wished to go to her state-room for a handkerchief, and there was no one at hand to take the baby while she was gone. Anita was showing the cook how to make light dumplings, as Caddy had taught her. It is a rare accomplishment, as every one knows, but on Cape Cod they make light dumplings just as easily as heavy ones are made elsewhere! And Anita wished to show her gratitude to the cook for very kindly making some little delicacies for the baby when it was ill. While the Fat Lady was sitting in her own great chair on the deck in the sunshine, it seemed safe to leave the baby with her. The baby liked her ample lap and the thin, high-keyed voice in which she sang was apt to make her sleepy.

The Fat Lady, when she felt obliged to go for her handkerchief, held the baby out to the Skeleton Man, who was nothing loth to take her. But the baby had prejudices or perhaps the sudden contrast struck her painfully, for she screamed and kicked and would not go.

It was then that the melancholy ourang-

outang, sitting upon the coil of rope, held out his arms, and the baby tried to spring into them, her screams changing to cheerful goo-goos. She had been born in a circus, and her earliest friends had been of the hairy tribes.

After the family left the circus she had been entrusted to the care of the great bear, Mézul, many times before she could toddle. Perhaps it was not to be wondered at that, when this strange, tall creature held out his arms she should have preferred a refuge in the soft, furry clasp to which she was accustomed.

"La! he wouldn't hurt her any more than I would," said the Fat Lady, easily, when the Skeleton Man remonstrated.

"And it will make the poor homesick creature feel better to cuddle her a little."

So, while the Fat Lady slowly and laboriously descended to her stateroom, and Anita made dumplings for the cook, the homesick ourang-outang cuddled the baby in a most motherly fashion.

The Fat Lady was absent longer than she meant to be. Her movements were necessarily slow, and her handkerchief—just the one she wanted—was mislaid.

The ourang-outang decided to promenade the deck with the baby in his arms. And just as he set out, Gustavus appeared on deck with Mézul. There had been rough weather, and the boy and the bear had both been sea-sick, and had come up now for a breath of fresh air.

The baby began to cry, perhaps realizing, suddenly, that her nurse was not quite like the furry ones to which she was accustomed; perhaps with a longing for her old protector, Mézul.

When the bear heard the cry he rushed at the ourang-outang, mad with rage. The baby, whose natural protector he was, had become the prey of this strange beast—new even to his varied experience.

This was evidently the way in which the situation appeared to poor Mézul's dull, bear brain. "There is always bear in bear," as the old saying runs, and now, for the first time, Gustavus found bear in gentle old Mézul. The bear was old and heavy and the ourang-outang was young and nimble. But the bear dragged Gustavus, who kept a firm hold of his collar, and the boy's strength was wholly ineffectual to stop or hinder him. There was a wild race up and down the

deck. Over and over again the ourang-outang's great agility saved him from the bear's furious grasp.

Twice when brought to bay he leaped upon the railing and, still holding the screaming baby, tight, prepared to leap into the ocean.

Instead of leaping he lowered himself to the bottom of the railing and hung down over the vessel's side, holding on by one skinny arm while he clutched the baby with the other.

The fat lady had hysterics and then fainted, and Anita screamed.

But the ourang-outang drew himself safely up again. Some of the deck hands had rushed upon the bear and secured him, but he escaped them and the wild race began again.

It was then that Manuel appeared on deck with Llewellyn Briggs' pistol. He held it to Mézul's head, shouting to him, at the same time, in his native Portuguese, the tongue which he always used with the bear. Subdued, either by the pistol or by the familiar voice, or exhausted by his unaccustomed activity, Mézul dropped back submissively and licked Manuel's hand, his red eyes losing their savage glare.

But the danger was not over; Anita's wild

scream warned Manuel of that. The ourang-outang was making for the bowsprit again. The chase had excited him to frenzy. There was a fiendish, defiant grin upon his face and he held the baby aloft as if to fling her into the sea.

Manuel leveled the pistol and fired at him without an instant's hesitation.

He had had some practice with that pistol of Llewellyn's at Porta Delgada. And he was "a resky little Portergee;" had not Cap'n 'Siah said so many a time. But what was to be done?

The ourang-outang was holding the baby aloft; Manuel knew that he must not hit her, but to fire seemed the only chance to save her. The creature stood still, then slowly swayed and fell upon the deck. He still held the baby fast and there was an ugly red stain upon her white dress where it had swept across his breast.

Anita snatched the baby up with hysterical sobs. There was a murmur of relief among the spectators as the tense strain relaxed. But Manuel knelt beside the poor wounded beast whose queerly human face was contracted with

pain and who moaned like a stricken man. His features were set, and a strange, gray pallor had overspread his face.

At this moment the proprietor of the circus appeared. He had slept in his berth all through the tumult, having been up nearly all the night before.

One of his employees had aroused him and now he was fiercely angry at what he called the stupidity that had caused the death of the ourang-outang.

It was the bear's fault; everyone agreed that it was all the bear's fault. Why had not Manuel shot the bear? There were bears enough! An old trick bear, stiff in all his joints, was of but little use; but the ourang-outang, the only one of his kind that had ever been imported, was very valuable.

There was a murmur of indignation that Manuel should be blamed. He had taken, as it seemed to every one, the only way to save the baby's life. The ourang-outang might even have hung over the vessel's side with her again and brought her safely back, but he seemed to have become suddenly maddened and reckless. Manuel had taken the one way and all the

spectators were disposed to regard him as a hero.

"It would have been right to shoot the bear rather than the poor, big monkey," said Manuel, "for he was maddened by the bear. It is not for justice, but to save Anita's baby that I shoot!"

The crowd applauded Manuel; the circus performers and the seamen all cheered. Anita took a fold of his rough jacket between her thumb and finger and kissed it, and the Fat Lady would have fallen upon his neck if she had not been dissuaded by the Skeleton Man.

The circus proprietor tried to curb his anger, since it was not popular. He was accustomed to trying to be popular, and he seldom forgot himself, even among his employees, which was fortunate for them. But he thought any one of any sense must see that since Manuel had shot the ourang-outang he must pay for him.

There were people who thought he might have waited until the poor beast had breathed his last and until the glow of enthusiasm over Manuel's rescue of the baby had cooled. But the circus proprietor, although he wished to be popular, could not help being business-like. It

was to him only a business misfortune that the ourang-outang had been shot.

That Portuguese girl, Llewellyn Briggs' wife, should have taken care of her baby! The circus proprietor probably would not have admitted it even to himself but what he really thought was that it had cost more to protect the baby than the baby was worth! "I paid five hundred dollars for that ourang-outang," he said, "and he would have been worth twenty-five hundred in a year or two."

"If you could have made him live," said one of the trainers. "It's always a great risk to import an ourang-outang."

"Then I suppose I ought to be willing to have him shot!" said the circus proprietor, on the verge of losing his temper. "You can give me your bear in payment," he added, turning to Manuel. "He is not worth half of five hundred dollars, but—"

"But he is not my bear," Manuel spoke, quietly, as he raised himself from the side of the suffering animal that he had shot, but he was so white and there was so sharp a line between his brows that he scarcely looked like Manuel, at all. Even in his anger and dismay

Gustavus was vaguely conscious of it. Manuel was always getting into scrapes; he looked as if he felt that this was the very worst one of all.

In truth, Manuel had a sympathetic nature and a tender heart, as it is hoped that every one has discovered who has read his story. His heart was sore over the suffering that he had caused. He had not, as yet, thought of the practical consequences. When they came home to him, with the circus proprietor's demand, his first feeling was only a confused surprise. He did not at first realize that he was in another of the scrapes that continually kept his faculties on the alert.

"Of course he isn't his bear!" blurted forth Gustavus. "He has only just helped to get him —him and me and the bear being old friends— and I'm going to pay him right away as soon as I can."

The proprietor cast a contemptuous half-glance upon Gustavus. "You paid for the bear and he is your property," he said to Manuel. "If there is any difficulty about the matter I shall attach him. Legal measures will cost you something more than the bear!"

Manuel's thin, white face reddened and his eyes flashed.

"If it is debt of honor I pay him," he said, firmly. "I have to think a while. I think now only of the big monkey that I have made to suffer. I cannot be sorry that I shoot because of the baby, but that the big monkey should be in pain I lament him. If it is right, I pay you all he cost—but I pay never with the bear of my heart's friend!"

There was a little murmur of applause. The show people were always ready with cheers or hisses. The Fat Lady even threw her arms around Manuel's neck, greatly to his embarrassment.

"I'm glad you're so rich that you can pay for the mischief you do," said the proprietor, sarcastically.

"Yes, I pay him, if I think it right," said Manuel stoutly—as stoutly as if his heart had not gone down—down like a lump at the thought of what this would mean to him. Five hundred dollars was the sum that he had received for his share of Asher Baker's patent, sold at the Azores. With that money he had expected to bring joy to the little house at the Point, to

help on Scauset's new prosperity and prove that, although mischances had befallen him, he was not a good-for-nothing little Portergee as Cap'n Seba Oakes had always declared him to be.

Five hundred dollars was a great deal of money at Porcupine Point, (as every one knows, the value of money is at once one of the most fixed and one of the most variable things in the world). And Manuel had meant to have a little share in Asher Baker's manufacturing. It was very evident that it would be wiser to use than to sell the patent in America, and Manuel had meant to help Scauset with more booms than one.

The ship's doctor was examining the ourang-outang's wound. He shook his head over it decidedly. The ball was in a bad place he said, it might be extracted but it was doubtful whether the animal would survive the operation. If he should do so it would probably be only to linger in a hopeless weakness for a longer or shorter period.

"Throw him overboard!" ordered the proprietor, after only a moment's reflection. "I'm not going to waste time on a beast with a bullet-hole through his lungs."

One of the sailors produced a piece of sail-cloth to wrap the poor beast in and a weight to attach to the body. The ourang-outang shuddered and uttered an almost human cry, as if he understood.

"Wait!" Manuel's dark, thin face was all aflame. "If I buy him he is mine. He shall not be throw to the sea! It is as if the good God have made him for a man."

"You ought to have thought of that before you shot him," said the proprietor, sharply.

"I think only of the baby, then," said Manuel, slowly. "All seem like the will of the good God; I cannot tell to blame myself or not! But I pay for the big monkey. Perhaps in the law I should not pay. It may be that the great judges would not make me. But I pay, and the big monkey he is mine and I take him with me to my own quarters."

The proprietor asked scornfully if he thought he was going to make a great "spec." out of him, and insisted for a while that the poor beast should be thrown overboard. But when he found that Manuel really had the money and meant to pay for the ourang-outang he made no

further objections to having him taken below where Manuel could care for him.

Manuel gave up his own berth to the wounded creature and Gustavus helped to nurse him. It was Gustavus' private opinion that this was an unnecessary scrape of Manuel's; but he had behaved generously about the bear.

The least one could do was to help take care of the ourang-outang until he died, which probably would not be long. The doctor kindly extracted the bullet and the ourang-outang, instead of dying under the operation, had a fever, like a person, after it was over.

It was a very repulsive, skeleton-like creature that was landed at New York, and with which the Scauset party traveled home, and for whose difficult transportation Manuel had to spend almost his last cent.

To go home penniless, and bringing so very queer a guest, was bitterly humiliating to the little Portergee, but he could not rid himself of the impression that the good God had made the "big monkey" for a man. There had been nothing to do but to save the baby; there was nothing now to do but to take care of the ourang-outang. But what would dear, long-

suffering Caddy say about having an ourang-outang in the wood-shed chamber? She had borne with the bear even when he had carried off her preserves; she had been the very soul of kindness to Anita and the baby, even to that scamp of Emilio.

"But I'm sure she'll draw the line at ourang-outangs!" said Gustavus, who had a prophetic soul and but little faith in girls.

He said that he felt as if it were "mean" of him to leave Manuel to go home alone with the ourang-outang; he would like to stand up for him just as he had stood up for Llewellyn Briggs when he married Anita and the baby, and to help him to take care of the ourang-outang as he (Manuel) had helped him to take care of the bear. But Manuel could see how it was, he said; this starring tour was the opportunity of a lifetime for him, and a great chance for the bear. Besides, Mézul couldn't get along with the ourang-outang. They had not become reconciled since that never-to-be-forgotten day when the bear had resented his having the baby in charge and the poor beast had been shot. It had been necessary to exercise great care to keep them apart on shipboard. It was,

perhaps. just as well on that account that the bear was not going home to Scauset.

"I'll tell you what you can do with him when he dies!" This was Gustavus' parting encouragement to Manuel. "You can have him stuffed and sell him to the Natural History Society in Boston! He's a rare one; you can see that he is; and you'll get a lot for him. Now, don't you be so taken up with Asher Baker's knitting machine that you don't think of what you can get out of that ourang-outang!"

Manuel was taken up with Asher Baker's patent, and he would never realize the possible profits or the delights of the show business. But he had a strong liking for animals. He had become attached to the ourang-outang, a docile and gentle creature, in his weakness, and was making every effort to save his life, with very little thought of practical gain.

Caddy was dismayed. She had become accustomed to a bear, but she was afraid of this strange creature that looked so human and yet so wild. She did not scream when Manuel led him into the house, as Mrs. Cyrus Dence would have done, but she said she was afraid that she

couldn't sleep a wink if he were in the wood-shed chamber.

Manuel lodged him in Asher Baker's shop, and when Caddy had been down there twice to see him, and had tried to get acquainted with him, as Manuel begged her to do, she said she thought he was "really nice," and she should like to have him in the wood-shed chamber!

The Scauset air or kindly care seemed to have a wonderful effect upon the ourang outang. He walked all over the house soon, and brought wood and water and helped about Caddy's little garden patch, and the neighbors began to call him Caddy's "hired girl." When Cap'n Seba Oakes happened to come along one morning before breakfast and found the ourang-outang turning Caddy's flapjacks he took to the woods as fast as his wooden leg would carry him!

He said it "appeared to him as if that little Portergee had dealins' with the powers of darkness, and could make 'em do just as he was a-mind to."

The ourang-outang had a very light and careful diet, and a new medicine that Gustavus had got from an animal trainer and sent home. But he wanted Caddy's flapjacks and clam fritters,

and one day Caddy let him have some; he seemed so hungry, just like a boy, she said. After that there was no more "light diet"! He ate "just like anybody else," as Manuel said, and he grew and grew. By the time the stocking factory was built he had to stoop his head to get in at the door! He was growing very strong and a little two high-spirited—or so people thought when he seized Grandsir Fretas' tall hat and carpetbag, and with the hat on his head and the bag in his hand went into the Fleetwell railroad station where people were waiting for the train! Manuel felt moved to ask the advice of his heart's friend. When it was a question of animals and shows Gustavus had superior knowledge.

Manuel knew that the ourang-outang must be sold, and that he could make a "spec." on him, as the circus proprietor had sarcastically suggested, when it seemed impossible that the poor beast could live.

"That man he shall not have him whatever he give, for he have not the heart kind," he wrote to Gustavus. Gustavus had discovered for himself by this time that the proprietor of the Royal Transatlantic Exhibition had not

"the heart kind," either for boys or bears. He had found an opportunity for the bear in another show. It was the circus that Llewellyn Briggs had left at Rockton. It was in the hands of a new proprietor with money. The Fat Lady had joined it, and spoke of it in the highest terms of praise. But Mézul did not like shows, Gustavus wrote, and, strange to say, Gustavus had found that he himself did not like them either!

"Shows ain't what they're cracked up to be," he wrote to Manuel. "Me and the Bear are fellows that like a home. Knockin' 'round makes us both cros and Scauset is better than Anny Other Plaice. 4 It is Hoam if thare is not Anny Room for me in the boom Perhaps L. Briggs will let me go coasting with him!"

The Royal Transatlantic Circus man came to Scauset himself to see the outrang-outang and offered Manuel five times as much as he had paid for him. But Manuel preferred to sell him to the Fat Lady's circus for only two thousand dollars. He knew he would be well-treated there. The Fat Lady said that she herself would look after him, and she had a very kind heart. Gustavus was not able to say that she might not be partly made of India-rubber, but

he knew that her heart was in the right place. Some people thought that Manuel had been foolish not to get all that he could for the ourang-outang.

"That little Portergee of yourn has gone plumb crazy, hain't he?" demanded Cap'n Seba Oakes, hobbling so fast towards the fence upon which Cap'n 'Siah was leaning, that the sand flew from beneath his wooden leg. "Throwin' away five hundred dollars!"

"I expect there's things that 'pear to be throwed away when they ain't." Cap'n 'Siah took his pipe from his mouth and spoke deliberately. "That ourang-outang was a terrible sight like a human cretur', and Manny he is a tender-hearted little Portergee."

Cap'n Seba said, before he stumped off again, that he "hoped Manny wouldn't squander all of that two thousand dollars before he had bought Grandsir Fretas a new tall hat."

Caddy said that for her part, she was prouder of Manuel than she ever had been before, and that was saying a great deal.

Caddy had her piazza, that summer, and that was not all. The shabby old house on the Point was made over into such a picturesque, pretty

cottage that people were always to be seen looking at it through their glasses when the steamer went by.

Llewellyn Briggs and Anita and the baby had a nice little house farther along on the Striped Marsh Road, and Llewellyn had hired the Delight for a coaster. Llewellyn said that the show business kind of mixed a man up in his ideas; he had never felt quite sure whether he was a man or a beast since he crawled along inside a stuffed crocodile, making believe the creature was alive. So he wanted no more shows, and Anita was "home girl" as she had longed to be.

Gustavus and the bear returned to Scauset on the very day when the great stocking manufactory, built on the edge of the Striped Marsh, just where Asher Baker's cranberries were "trompled" down, was finished.

There was a neighborhood party to celebrate the factory's completion, and the inauguration of the new firm of Baker & Silva. A neighborhood party it was called, but people came from Kingstown and Fleetwell and Tooraloo, and all up and down the Cape. Scauset's boom meant good to every one and every one

agreed with Cap'n 'Siah, who was joyful almost to tears, that Manuel was "the beatermost little Portergee"—although Cap'n Seba did qualify his agreement by saying: "It beat all that he hadn't been ate up by wild beasts, or drownded, or something, when he was so resky."

Anita sang and the bear displayed all his tricks and was in great glee at the home-coming.

The very next day Gustavus went into Jude Atwood's store as clerk. He said if Scauset was good enough for Manuel it was for him. And bye-and-bye there was going to be a chance for him to work up into the business of Baker & Silva.

If the little Portergee ever longs for the "road of the bold" and for the stirring adventures in which his heart naturally delights, he is quite consoled for all that he has missed by the reflection that he has brought great happiness to the dear ones who have become as his own people, and that the making of the little hamlet, upon whose sands he was tossed up, into a large and prosperous town is as fine an adventure as he could have.

"East, West, hame's best."

ADVENTURE STORIES FOR BOYS

WINNING HIS WAY TO WEST POINT

By Capt. Paul B. Malone, U. S. A. Illustrated by F. A. Carter. The boy who can read this book without wanting to do something soldierly has no red blood in him. It tells the experiences of a young recruit in the Philippines after the transfer of the islands to the United States. The hero bears himself manfully and well, and as a result of his bravery and service, wins an appointment to West Point. The book is written by an officer who saw active service in Luzon and is now an instructor at West Point.

THE WRECK OF THE SEA LION

By W. O. Stoddard. Illustrated by John H. Betts. Tales of the sea are always fascinating to young people, especially when some active, adventuresome boys supply plenty of thrilling escapades to add to the interest. The story of an eventful cruise in Southern Waters, as told by an old sea captain, and the ludicrous boastings and experiments of a would-be scientist, constitute a pleasing variety of incident, and afford just that amount of instructive material needed to make a perfect book for young readers.

THE YOUNG FINANCIER

By W. O. Stoddard. Illustrated by John H. Betts. A unique story, the scene of which is laid in the money center of New York City. The young hero begins life as a broker's messenger and passing rapidly from one post to another in good time rises to a position of importance and responsibility. Numerous exciting experiences incident to the eventual success in his business career all combine to form a most interesting narrative.

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TRUE TO HIS TRUST

By EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M. Illustrated by J. STEEPLE DAVIS. The hero of this story will win his way at once into the heart of every one, and his pluck and perseverance will carry the sympathy of every reader through his many adventures, struggles, and singular experiences. Like all of the author's works, the incidents teach in the most convincing manner that true manliness and sturdy integrity are the only principles through which happiness and success in life are possible.

COMRADES TRUE

By EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M. Illustrated. In following the career of two friends from youth to manhood, the author weaves a narrative of intense interest. This story is more realistic than is usual, as the two heroes pass through the calamitous forest fires in Northern Minnesota and barely escape with their lives. They have other thrilling adventures and experiences in which the characteristics of each are finely portrayed.

AMONG THE ESQUIMAUX

By EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M. Illustrated. The scenes of this story are laid in the Arctic region, the central characters being two sturdy boys whose adventurous spirit often leads them into dangerous positions. They visit Greenland; go on a hunting expedition, have a number of stirring adventures and hairbreadth escapes, but ultimately reach home safe and sound. It is a capital and instructive book for boys.

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THE CAMPERS OUT

By EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M. Illustrated. Many of the scenes are so vividly described that the reader can, in his imagination, enjoy the excitement of the chase and all the pleasures of a good camping tour. In addition to the vivid descriptions of many exciting adventures, this story teaches a lesson in morals that cannot fail to prove helpful to every reader. It is well planned and well written, and is full of adventure of just the right sort.

THE YOUNG GOLD SEEKERS

By EDWARD S. ELLIS, A. M. Illustrated by F. A. CARTER. A thrilling account of the experiences of two boys during a trip to the gold fields of Alaska. The hardships that they endure, the disappointments they suffer, the courage and perseverance that they manifest in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and their eventual success in their undertaking, are all most graphically portrayed.

ANDY'S WARD

By JAMES OTIS. Illustrated. A fascinating narrative of the life and experiences of "Museum Marvels." They dwell in a house owned by a sword-swallower, whose wife, the "Original Circassian," is entrusted with its management. The rest of the household includes a dwarf, nicknamed the "Major," a fat lady, a giant, and a snake-charmer. The private life of the marvels forms a story full of incident, and one that possesses that peculiar simplicity of style which has won for this author such a host of readers.

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CHASING A YACHT

By JAMES OTIS. Illustrated. A semi-nautical tale of adventure about boys, written for boys, and will certainly be appreciated by boys wherever they may be found. The story of how the heroes, two bright, manly fellows, built a steam yacht, how she was stolen from them, and how they eventually regained possession of her, is full of life and is replete with exciting and interesting incident that will rivet the attention throughout.

THE BRAGANZA DIAMOND

By JAMES OTIS. Illustrated. A volume that will hold its readers spell-bound as they follow the two boy characters and the bright, courageous girl in their search for the famous diamond. Much useful information is incidentally conveyed and many things with which few persons are familiar are explained. It will hold the attention of young readers as much as Robinson Crusoe.

IN ALASKAN WATERS

By W. BERT FOSTER. Illustrated by W. S. LUKENS. A sturdy lad of San Francisco is taken, against his will, aboard a vessel bound on the unlawful errand of seal poaching in Alaska. At the time of his departure a large sum of money disappears from his guardian's safe, and suspicion naturally, but unjustly, is attached to the boy. The unraveling of the mystery created by this incident, the proving of the hero's innocence, and his thrilling adventures at sea, form a fascinating story.

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THE LOST GALLEON

By W. Bert Foster. Illustrated by J. Steeple Davis. The search for a lost treasure ship and her eventual discovery form the basis of this very dramatic story. It possesses a great deal of originality, and is free from the conventional incidents that usually characterize stories of this description. Incidentally, much valuable information is afforded the reader by the insight that is given into the ship-chandlery business, in which the young hero engages as the means of earning a livelihood.

EXILED TO SIBERIA

By William Murray Graydon. Illustrated by F. A. Carter. This is one of the most thrilling stories ever written. The heroes, two American boys, become involved in a political plot that nearly costs them their lives. As nearly all the action occurs in the mines and military prisons of frozen Siberia it can readily be imagined that in the midst of such dramatic surroundings the interest is most intense. The plot is absorbing, the adventure exciting, the movement rapid, and the style unsurpassed.

IN THE CAMP OF THE CREEKS

By Louis Pendleton. Illustrated by F. A. Carter. Not a sensational Indian story, but a stirring tale of the last stand made by the Creek Indians in Georgia. The chief actors, two young men and a girl, fall into the hands of the Creeks, and only after numerous exciting adventures succeed in making their escape. There is considerable information pertaining to the pastimes and customs of the Indians, and not a little historical information.

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THE LOST GOLD MINE

By FRANK H. CONVERSE. Illustrated. At the opening of this story, the hero, by a singular circumstance, finds himself in possession of certain papers relating to a gold mine in the far West, and he and his chum conclude to make a search for it. Their untiring efforts are eventually crowned with success, but not until the party has suffered many privations and escaped numerous impending dangers such as characterized the early days of the gold fever.

THE YOUNG SHIPBUILDER

By SOPHIE SWETT. Illustrated by JOHN HENDERSON BETTS. This is a delightful tale of some New England young people who are left to fight the battle of life alone. Through many hardships and discouragements they continue the old shipyard, and by dint of great perseverance and nobility of purpose, finally attain much success.

A CAPE COD BOY

By SOPHIE SWETT. Illustrated by P. T. HOYT. A realistic story of the New England Coast, in which are vividly depicted the manly efforts of a Portuguese castaway, who attempts to assist a family in return for kindness shown him. A pronounced sea atmosphere pervades the whole story, which contains many thrilling adventures by water and hardships on land. A performing bear, escaped from a traveling menagerie, is quite an interesting figure and affords much amusement and excitement.

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A MOONSHINER'S SON

By WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE. Illustrated by F. A. CARTER. The scene of this dramatic story is laid in the mountains of Tennessee amid the haunts of the illicit distillers. The hero is made to suffer many hardships as a result of his father's unlawful business, but after the latter's tragic death, the boy is afforded an opportunity of going to a large city, where his sterling merit soon brings him into prominence. The story is full of the most thrilling incidents, and the tone is wholesome and elevating.

THE MONCASKET MYSTERY

By SIDNEY MARLOW. Illustrated. Wise indeed is that teacher or parent who provides his children with such healthful and entertaining reading as this book will prove to be. It is a pleasing story, full of base-ball and fishing experiences, with just sufficient "mystery" to add zest to the tale. The principal character is not called upon to perform any impossible feats, but he exemplifies his character in the pursuits of daily life and always proves faithful to the confidence reposed in him.

HARRY AMBLER

By SIDNEY MARLOW. Illustrated. A charming story of a bright boy, that is full of exciting incidents, and is told in a pleasing style. It is interesting without being sensational, and incidentally shows that courage and honesty are the sure roads to success. The characteristics displayed by the hero can be emulated with profit by boys generally. The book points out a moral without making that the "reason of being" of the story.

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FINDING A FORTUNE

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. Illustrated by W. S. LUKENS. Most boys would consider themselves very lucky to find a box of bonds and bring to justice the rascals who had stolen them, but Harry Gilbert simply did what he thought was right and persisted in it, even though at one time it looked as if the rascals would outwit him. In the end, however, everything turns out well for the manly, upright boy, and he receives his just reward.

FORGING AHEAD

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. Illustrated by W. S. LUKENS. This is an interesting narrative of an earnest, energetic, and ambitious boy, who supports his widowed mother, and by persistent efforts against great odds succeeds in rising in the world. There is an abundance of incident and adventure, and the story is one that will encourage any young reader to an effort to make the best of himself.

THE WORLD BEFORE HIM

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. Illustrated by ROBERT L. MASON. The hero, who has been led to expect a comfortable income, is suddenly thrown upon his own resources through the scheming villainy of his stepfather. He is confronted with many difficulties, but by perseverance, courtesy, and good, hard common sense, works his way steadily upward.

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